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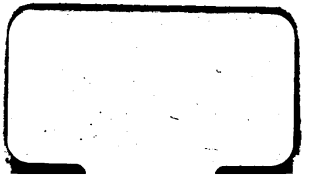

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THORNTON ABBEY:

A SERIES OF

LETTERS

ON

RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

by John Satchel

A scrupulosity of temper in the use of any lawful means to promote the spiritual or temporal welfare of mankind, receives no countenance either from reason or Revelation, or from the conduct of the best and wisest men. And when to this we add the zeal and diligence with which bad men (and eminently at the present period) practise every device to spread universal mischief, who shall deny that it is allowable for every good man, nay, still more, that it is his duty, by every fair and practicable method, to diffuse good; and when it is rejected in one form, to try whether it may not find entertainment in another?

ELY BATES.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY WILLIAMS & WHITING,

AT THEIR THEOLOGICAL AND CLASSICAL BOOK-STORE,

N°. 118, Pearl-street.

J. SEYMOUR, PRINTER.

1809.

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PREFACE.

THE author of the following work was the late Mr. JOHN SATCHEL, of Kettering. It is with pleasure I express not only my approbation of its leading sentiments, but the regard I feel for the memory of my friend.

I was not intimately acquainted with him till within a few years of his death: but during that period I saw in him much to esteem. To serious cheerfulness, frankness, kindness, and generosity, were added a lively imagination, a fertile invention, and a certain spring of soul, which would not suffer him to live inactive. Whatever his hands found him to do, he did it with his might.

Having observed that much evil was conveyed to the rising generation by the enchanting works of fiction, it was his wish to convey truth and godliness through that medium. His turn of mind was adapted to this manner of writing. His characters, though fictitious, were to him real. He would sorrow in their sorrows, rejoice in their joys, and frequently bedew his papers with tears. Being a close observer of human nature, he has exhibited a faithful representation of human life.

In his youth he was much attached to *Mr. Hervey*, and sometimes went to Weston-Favel to hear him. After this an intimate friendship subsisted about twenty years between him and *Mr. Abraham Maddock*, an evangelical

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clergyman at Kettering, which continued till the death of the latter in 1785. Considering this, it may seem rather extraordinary that he should be so decidedly averse to religious establishments: but his dislike was not to persons, but things.

He approved of many things in Glas and Sandeman, but greatly disliked their controversial bitterness, and the scorn with which they treated persons whom he considered as great and good men, however in some things they might have erred. I have heard him say, "If you read *Edwards on the Affections*, you will find the greatest part of what is valuable in Sandeman, without any thing of his spirit." He also remarked, that many of the followers of Glas and Sandeman were men of a dissipated life, and feared that some of them were very little short of deists. His remarks on some of the peculiarities of Sandeman may be seen in letter xli. The substance of that letter was some years since sent to a friend in Edinburgh, who, taking it for a real conversation, printed it under the title of *Serious Considerations addressed to Glasites, and other Congregational Separatists from the Church of Scotland.*

The present work is offered to the public, partly by the request of the author's friends, and partly as a tribute of filial affection. That the divine blessing may attend it, is the prayer of the reader's well-wisher,

ANDREW FULLER.

London, 1807.

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THORNTON ABBEY.

MR. JAMES NEVILLE, a gentleman descended from a long train of ancestors, who had constantly adhered to the Church of Rome, after making the grand tour of Europe, returned to his native country. His father, who was a widower, having died in his absence, he determined to spend the remainder of his days in the enjoyment of a domestic life; for which purpose he chose to occupy the family seat, a large Gothic building which was situated at Thornton, a village in the neighbourhood of Castle-Hampton.

Mr. Neville, being a comely, well-bred gentleman, and very rich, found little difficulty in obtaining a wife. A friend of his about twenty miles distant, had a ward that was an heiress, who also was a member of the church of Rome: they soon became agreeable to each other, and were united in the bonds of wedlock. In the course of four years they were blessed with three fine children; William, who was the eldest, so named after his grandfather, Maria, and Eusebia. Mr. Neville having the misfortune to lose a most tender and accomplished wife at the birth of this last child, did all in his power to perpetuate her memory, by calling it by her name.

Very little occurred for several years worthy of relation. Mr. Neville chiefly employed himself in forming the minds of his children. He oft observed, that the many apostacies, as he termed them, from the church of Rome, owed their origin to the want of early instruction; and that the minds of youth uncultivated, may be compared to lands neglected by the husbandman, which receive all the seeds that are scattered at random by the winds. He

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seemed indeed to have it only at heart, that his children might inherit his religion as well as his estate, and that what he was pleased to call the Catholic Apostolic faith, might be transmitted to his latest posterity. He remembered with thankfulness the care which his parents had taken of his education; so that in a land filled with heresies, and every day multiplying their number, he had never once swerved from the sentiments which they had taught him.

The great affection he had for his children, made him determine not to marry again. My dear children, he would often say, I do but live for you: your happiness is the utmost bound of my wishes. Whenever the weather permitted, he used to walk with them in his gardens, or in the fields, and point out the wisdom of God in the works of creation, and his goodness in providing for all his creatures. At other times he would extol the uniformity of the church of Rome, contrasting it with the divisions and subdivisions of heretics. He would also repeatedly ask their sentiments on every subject which he thought within the compass of their knowledge, and would reward those of them with books or money, who he judged had given the most pertinent answers. This was such a spur to the emulation of the young gentleman and his sisters, that they were constantly racking their invention to outvie each other; and by this method there was not a sentiment of their father's which they did not so thoroughly imbibe and digest, as to make it their own.

Their education was intrusted to a priest who resided in the family. He was a native of Florence, and had accompanied Mr. Neville in his travels. This gentleman was well acquainted with the classics, and was of a temper kind and obliging. In a word, Antonio Albino, (for that was his name,) by his engaging manners had secured the respect of the family, and the entire confidence and affection of his pupils.

Master Neville was a lover of learning, and possessed

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a retentive memory; so that at the age of fifteen, to Greek and Latin he had added French and Italian, with some knowledge of the Hebrew: all these he acquired without thinking that learning was a burden.

Mr. Neville was also very happy in his daughters. Maria, who was the eldest, was gay, lively, and of a ready wit, and might have been termed pretty before she had the small-pox; but that dreadful disease robbed her of a beauty, which perhaps she thought too highly of. Eusebia was of a modest, meek, and engaging temper. She was rather tall for her age, but exactly proportioned; which, together with a fine open countenance, regular features, and a delicate complexion, made her the envy of her sex. These endowments are too often overvalued. Beauty is many times the gift of Providence to the proudest, vainest, silliest people. This momentary excellence leads such persons to value and adorn the casket, while they neglect the jewel. They do not consider that it is the mind only which constitutes the perfection of our nature; that exterior advantages are enjoyed by us in common with the brute creation; and that in many of them we are far outstripped by the savages of the desert.

Mr. Neville was constantly watchful to guard his daughters against the errors too common to their sex. My children, he would say, a noble building requires sumptuous furniture: yet I have seen many ladies with agreeable persons, whose minds and bodies have been the greatest contrast. How are we chagrined when we find these pretty things to be mere outside. Such may make many conquests, but they can retain those only who are as empty as themselves. Whereas if a woman have but a moderate share of this outside varnish, yet if we perceive her to be modest, discreet, humble, and courteous, we are agreeably disappointed. A wise man judges such a one to be a proper friend and companion for life; fit to be the mistress of a family, and likely to sow the seeds of piety and virtue in the tender minds of her offspring. Such a woman is a blessing to mankind in general, and

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especially to the rising generation; children generally keeping that bent which is given them in their childhood.

Thus did he take every opportunity of conversing with them on the most important subjects; and the visible improvement which they made in knowledge and obedience showed that his labour was not in vain. The feuds and animosities too common among children brought up together, were scarcely known in this family; and if at any time peevishness took place of affability, a glance of the father's eye was sufficient to restore the former tranquillity. He had indeed the art of being obeyed as implicitly as an eastern monarch, at the same time that he ruled with the greatest moderation and sweetness.

Notwithstanding Mr. Neville was of the Romish communion, he was every where well received, and his acquaintance was courted by the neighbouring gentry. He had an agreeable turn for conversation, and was of a ready wit: yet he never, by indulging the self-sufficient sneer, or the cutting repartee, gave pain to the meanest person; nor could he patiently hear others make use of that cruel liberty; justly observing, that he who can laugh at hearing a man abused, would find equal reason for mirth if he were to see him thrown into the dirt; and that nothing can be baser than this malevolent disposition, since the best characters, and the most sacred things, may be distorted by false wit, and rendered the subjects of ridicule.

He was easy of access to the poorest persons of his village, who ever found him ready to commiserate their distresses, and to relieve their wants. He judged that nothing was better calculated to bring them within the pale of the church than those arguments to their senses, which the very dullest were capable of understanding: and the event proved that he made a just estimate of human nature.

When alone with his children, he would oft deplore the miseries that were brought upon this nation by its schism from the church of Rome. When men, he would say, once get out of the high road into crooked paths, it is no

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wonder they should quarrel about which is the right way, since they are all wrong. If the church of Rome be not the only true universal church of Christ, where are we to look for it? Let common sense judge. Had Christ no church before Luther? If he had, where did it exist, if the chuch of Rome were not that church? What was the origin of this schism, which has had its reward in the divided state of all those who have been out of the pale of the church ever since? It was the lust of an impious king; and the covetousness of court sycophants, who with longing eyes beheld the possessions of the church, which they were willing to plunder under any pretext. The same reason keeps their descendants from returning to its bosom. They are unwilling to restore their ill-gotten gain. From such causes what better effects could be expected? O my children, it is your highest honour that you are descended from ancestors, who, in this divided, distracted land, have uninterruptedly kept the faith. Transmit it, my dear offspring, to your posterity, as I have done to you. Could I think the contrary, it would be despair and death to me. You will meet with many opponents, who will speak evil of those things which they understand not; but I flatter myself you are able to defend yourselves against any common adversary.

At a small distance from his house was a wilderness through which were cut many mazy walks, bordered on each side with a great variety of flowering shrubs and evergreens, and shaded by lofty oaks, limes, and chesnuts. Here Mr. Neville delighted to walk in the summer months with his children; for he seemed to enjoy nothing without them.

One day, after they had been sometime in this cool retreat, conversing about indifferent matters, My children, said he, do you meet with no rebuffs, or foolish pity on account of your religion? I ask this, because I know the world, and that part of it especially where Providence has fixed our lot.

I assure you, Sir, replied Maria, those who have hither-

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to encountered us have had little reason to boast of any advantage they have gained. The truth is, religion seems to be no part of the business of the polite world; and the poor too frequently follow the example of the rich. It has been rare that any other argument has been used than ridicule, which, in the opinion of too many, is the test of truth. Persons, however, of this character, have learned to laugh at religion in general: it is no wonder therefore that ours does not escape their derision.

My children, said he, I believe what you say, that your opponents have gained no advantage over you; since, as Shakspeare says, *Thrice is he arm'd who has his quarrel just.* With regard to ridicule's being the test of truth, nothing is more false. The time is coming, when the laughter of those who assert it will be turned into mourning; and when the righteous Judge will say to them, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish. It was foretold, that there should come, in the last day, scoffers, walking after their own lusts; which prophecy is abundantly verified. These men talk of honesty, moral rectitude, and the fitness of things; but their practice is too frequently the reverse. The two great springs of human action are fear and hope: these being once broken or obstructed, every part of our moral conduct is inevitably disordered. The best of the heathens, such as Socrates, Plato, Tully, Seneca, and many others, so far as they were influenced to lead a virtuous life, were actuated by a faint hope of immortality. I wish these mockers were only to be found among those who have left the Catholic church; but it is to be lamented, that these tares of infidelity have taken such deep root in the world, and have spread so far and wide, that many, too many of them, have sprung up among ourselves.

Pray, Sir, said Eusebia, of the many sectaries who are divided from the Catholic church, which do you think the worst?

My dear, replied he, of the many withered branches you see upon the ground, which do you think the worst?

Alas! these heretical sectaries have all rent the seamless coat of Christ, and destroyed that uniformity which was the glory of the church for many ages. Instead of being, as formerly, under the bishop of Rome as the common bond of union, every one believes and does that which is right in his own eyes. If, however, I were to give the preference to any, it would be to the church of England. Her bishops dare not deny the uninterrupted succession in the see of Rome: their own ordination would be invalid, even in their own esteem, if they were to do this. But behold their inconsistency. Although they confess that ours is a true church, and consequently never re-ordain any priest who goes from us to them; yet they have violently rent themselves from this true church, and are, therefore, as I before said, only to be considered as in the same state with these withered branches and as lying under the fearful curse of St. Peter's successors. If they should say in their own defence, that there are some things among us which need reformation, we acknowledge it. All good men have prayed for the perfection, as well as for the peace of the church; but this perfection they have found easier to be desired than attained. When that violent schism took place in the time of Luther, they called it the Reformation; but if you would know what kind of reformation it was, you need only look at the lives of the reformed. Where will you find among them those alms-deeds and acts of hospitality, that voluntary poverty, that renunciation of the world, and that mortification of the body, which are to be met with among us?

All these things, said Maria, are so obvious, that it is a matter of wonder with me, that they who abandoned our communion should continue to make any profession of Christianity. I conceive the guilt would have been very little more, if they had renounced the name as well as the thing.

Yet so blind are they, replied he, to their own imperfections, that every different sect of heretics thinks itself only to be right; and they are such consummate deceiv-

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ers, that many in my time, of whom I hoped better things, have forsaken the flock of Christ to follow these blind guides. O my children! that you may be guarded against every error, is the summit of my wishes: and be assured, that a failure in this point would make me abhor and detest you: I should think the roof accursed under which you dwelt, and the earth polluted on which you trod, nor would I ever see you more. I thus speak, because I would arm you on the right hand and on the left.

The young ladies thanked their father for his tender care of them; and told him, that if they should ever be so far lost to a sense of their duty and of their interest, as to become heretics, they desired him to show them no favour.

At Barnwell, a village about four miles distant, lived a gentleman, whose name was Mr. Robert Barnwell. He was the son of a Jamaica planter, and was born in that island, where he resided with his father till he was in the twenty-fifth year of his age, except only five years that he had lived in England, whither his father had sent him, when he was a boy, to be educated.

Mr. Barnwell had risen from very small beginnings, his first occupation in Jamaica being that of a menial servant to a planter; who, perceiving him to be industrious, on leaving the island made him overseer of his plantation; after which, by a train of favourable circumstances, he at length arrived to considerable opulence.

When the old gentleman arrived in England with his son, he waited a long while before he could please himself in a purchase; for being a man who looked a great way before him, he thought that in process of time some of his family might be ennobled. He determined, therefore, to buy an estate, where the name of the village belonging to it was sonorous, and of considerable length, that it might serve for a title. He was a man of such refined taste in this respect, that he would have thought five hundred or a thousand pounds well bestowed in an additional syllable. After long waiting in vain, fortune favoured him, as he termed it, in a way he never expected. The village

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and lordship of Barnwell were to be disposed of, to pay a debt of honour contracted at Newmarket. He became a purchaser without hesitation; for notwithstanding there was at least a syllable too little in the name, yet as it was the same with his own, he justly thought that it would give his family an air of antiquity. He would say sometimes to those with whom he was intimate, (for what is uppermost will come out some time or other,) Now, does not Giles Barnwell, Esq. of Barnwell, sound very well? And when they answered in the affirmative, which truth, as well as good manners obliged them to do,—Yes, he would say, but Lord Barnwell, of Barnwell, would sound much better; and who knows but some of my posterity may come to that honour, if I do not? And even if I myself should be ennobled, as strange things as that happen almost every day. The old gentleman's foible was, with little reason, made the subject of ridicule by the wits of that time; since the vain pursuits of mankind in general, are at best but of equal importance. If he appeared more culpable than his neighbours, it was only owing to his being more sincere. Had they been as open, they would have been equally exposed to the shafts of satire.

He now employed his time in building an elegant seat near the church, and in walling and planting a garden. He had almost completed his design, and was promising himself the peaceable enjoyment of the fruits of his labours for many years to come, when having drank pretty freely the preceding evening, in the company of several neighbouring gentlemen, who had come to visit him, he was found dead in bed, having been seized, as was supposed, by an apoplectic fit.

Mr. Robert Barnwell, his only surviving child, had not been in the enjoyment of his patrimony above a year, before he married a young lady whose name was Chauncey. She was the sister of Mrs. Worthington, the wife of Mr. Worthington, a West-India merchant, at whose house he resided when he was in London. Mr. Barnwell had four

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children, three of whom died in their infancy. Miranda, the youngest, who was the only one that lived to years of maturity, was so named at the earnest desire of her mother, because Miranda was the name of an imaginary character in a book of devotion which Mrs. Barnwell had read with great pleasure. This lady died of a consumption, when her daughter was in her thirteenth year. She was a pious gentlewoman, and had taken much pains to instill the principles of religion into the tender mind of her child. A more than ordinary vivacity and liveliness of temper, together with a turn for company and amusements, caused her to profit but little from her mother's instruction; but she was the darling of her father, who thought he saw every part of his own image impressed on his daughter.

Mr. Barnwell was of the church of England, but thought it the duty of every person to remain where he was brought up. He looked upon dissenters, whom he termed sectaries, as a wrongheaded people: however, their continuing of the same sentiments with their parents he considered rather as their misfortune than as their fault. But with regard to those runagates, as he called them, who left the established church, he thought them beneath contempt; and would sometimes say, and even swear, that if he had been brought up a Turk or a Jew, he would not have changed his religion. He would observe, that it was of no importance what a man believed, but that practice was every thing, and would often quote those lines of Pope,

> For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
> His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.

Of all the productions of the press, none pleased Mr. Barnwell better than the drama. Here, he would say, we see the world in miniature, and find virtue and vice painted in their proper colours. He was also fond of promoting the representation of plays among the young persons in his neighbourhood; for he considered the stage as the properest place to form the manners of youth. He obser-

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ved that there they gained a graceful attitude, an easy carriage, a becoming confidence, and a just pronunciation.

Miss Barnwell needed no incitement to things of this kind, as they were quite agreeable to the natural bent of her inclination. Yet, in the midst of all these pursuits, she received many checks from conscience, which, like an unwelcome visitant, would be oft intruding. The divine maxims which had been early inculcated by her pious mother, would frequently furnish matter for conviction. At such times she made many resolations, that God should have some part at least of her time and affections. These promises being made through constraint, it is needless to say that they were very badly kept.

She was about nineteen years of age, when, as she was looking over her mother's library, she accidentally took down a quarto Bible, and, opening it, found a quarter of a sheet of paper pinned to one of the leaves, which her mother had written, as appeared by the date, but two days before her death. It contained the following words:

Miranda, my dear child, the child of many prayers! I am going into the presence of my dear Redeemer, where I have no doubt but I shall meet with a happy reception, as in him only has been my confidence. But alas, my love, I fear I am taking a long, an everlasting farewell of you and your poor father. A great and impassable gulf must forever separate us, unless God in his mercy should cause you, my dear child, to make this book your bosom friend, your daily companion. The words which it contains are the words of God. Pray over every sentence. Here only can you learn what he is; what you are; what you are capable of being in this world, through his word and Spirit; and what both the righteous and the wicked will be during a long eternity. Farewell.

Upon reading this paper, Miss Barnwell shed floods of tears. The dread that her dear mother's words should prove prophetical, and that she should indeed never see her any more, made a deep impression on her mind; and she made many vows and resolutions, that for the future

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she would be a new creature, and entirely devoted to God and to his service. She appointed set times for prayer, and for reading the Scriptures, earnestly imploring the Majesty of heaven and earth to second her good endeavours. But notwithstanding all her vigilance, she discovered so many defects in herself, arising either from the omission of duty, the commission of sin, or that propensity which she had to vain company and trifling amusements, that her heart frequently sank under the burden. She was loath to go backward; yet numberless disappointments and broken resolutions made her despair of getting forward. Instead of the ways of God being an easy yoke, and a light burden, she thought them the hardest yoke, and the heaviest burden.

An elderly gentleman, named Clifford, frequently visited at the house of Mr. Barnwell. He was a person who seemed to aim at being taken notice of in the world, by pretending to doubt of every thing; and though, according to his own sentiments, he had no certainty of being right yet no one could appear fonder of gaining proselytes. The design of his pretended doubtings being to discredit divine revelation, he would take every opportunity to affirm, that Moses and the Prophets, together with Christ and his Apostles, were impostors. Yea, upon occasion, this doubter could demonstrate, that a miracle had not been wrought since the creation of the world, if by the way it were created, which was also matter of doubt with him.

It was the misfortune of Miss Barnwell to fall into the hands of this doubting, positive gentleman. He took an opportunity to give the conversation a religious turn, and began with showing, that every religion had its origin in the invention of some legislator, or priest, or both; and that Christianity was an engine of the state. He then endeavoured to prove, that men of liberal sentiments had always looked upon these things with contempt, they being only calculated for the meridian of the vulgar. What, cried he, do you think of the speaking of Balaam's ass; or of Samson's throwing down a temple by mere strength;

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or of his carrying the gates of Gaza? Miss Barnwell replied that she had not sufficiently considered those things to be able to defend them. She soon, however, retired to her closet, when the poison which had been poured into her ear began to operate. She fully assented to the doctrine of her new teacher, and furnished herself with the following additional proof of there being no reality in religion. I have, said she to herself, both fasted, prayed, and watched, and taken every method to become religious, and all to no purpose; for while I have been engaged in this fruitless toil, I have resembled the fabled Sisyphus, who was condemned to roll a stone up hill, which continually returned upon him.

How glad was this young lady to be loosed from those restraints and fears, which she now thought were only fit to intimidate the vulgar. Like a deer escaped from the huntsman, she determined once more to mix with the herd, and to enjoy her former pleasures and her ease again. She made the trial: pleasure and a round of dissipation were the only objects of her pursuit: but she soon discovered that this plaister would not cover the sore. At many times she would cry out, O what a wretch am I! Without a God; without hope of immortality! My utmost wish is to die like a beast, without the poor expectation of living one thousandth part so happily! If I had the wealth of the Indies in my possession, I would part with it all to be a snake or a toad! At other times she would reflect that she must now either openly avow herself to be an infidel, or put on the mask of hypocrisy, and pretend to be what she was not, which last she could not bear to think of. I must never, she would say, alter my condition, nor impose such a wretch on any man for a wife. Besides, how, or in what manner, could I instruct my children? I am all doubt and uncertainty. If there be a God, I have no knowledge of him. I neither know for what end I came into the world, nor what will become of me when I go out of it.

In this deplorable state of mind she continued more than half a year, neither looking into any books calculated

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to satisfy her doubts, nor conversing with any person for that purpose. The attempts she had made to be religious without success, were, in her esteem, proofs equal to a demonstration, that all religions consisted of nothing but priestcraft, and that the precepts of Christianity were a collection of impossibilities which no one could perform.

This disorder of her mind affected her in such a manner, that she was no longer the same. There is so intimate a connexion between the soul and body, that one cannot suffer without the other. Miss Barnwell had hitherto enjoyed an extraordinary share of health: but now the roses withered in her cheeks; her sprightliness forsook her, and nothing was left but a melancholy dejection and lowness of spirits. The Miss Nevilles, and several of her young acquaintance, visited her, and endeavoured to remove that pensiveness which brooded upon her countenance; but the medicines which they used were unfit for her disease. Mr. Barnwell, whose very life was wrapped up in that of his daughter, was exceedingly alarmed, and called in the assistance of the faculty; but all they could prescribe was of no use.

Mrs. Worthington, the sister of Mrs. Barnwell, was at this time upon a visit at her brother-in-law's. Since the death of her husband, she had resided at a house which she had at Islington. She was a very religious gentlewoman, of the Independent denomination. She was brought up in the church of England; but having married a dissenter, she chose to accompany her husband to the meeting; at first out of complaisance, but afterwards from principle. Mrs. Worthington endeavoured for some time to find out the cause of her niece's disorder, without effect; but that which she had so long sought for in vain, she at last discovered in the following manner. She had oft observed her to walk for an hour or two together in a retired part of the garden; and as her anxious desire to become acquainted with, and if possible to remove the cause of her niece's indisposition, whatever it might be, excited her narrowly to watch every part of

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her conduct, she took an opportunity at one of these times to conceal herself behind a yew-hedge near the place, through a small interstice of which she could perceive that her mind was greatly agitated. After walking backward and forward for some time, at last she stopped and cried out, lifting up her hands to heaven, O thou great Unknown, illuminate, I beseech thee, the darkness of a worm, if I am not beneath thy notice.

Mrs. Worthington stole softly from the place, having now no doubt what was her niece's disorder. After much deliberation, she determined not to mention it to Mr. Barnwell, with whose character she was perfectly acquainted; nor did she think it prudent to say much at present to her niece. She had before proposed to Mr. Barnwell, that his daughter should spend the summer at her house, to which he had consented; and being now desirous to depart, that she might have an opportunity of probing her niece's wound, they set off in a few days for Islington.

On the road, Mrs. Worthington every now and then attempted to converse upon some religious subject; but Miss Barnwell declined talking as much as possible. Once indeed she said, And don't you think, Madam, that the penmen of the Scriptures were as liable to err as we are? No, my child, replied Mrs. Worthington; they were influenced by the Spirit of the God of Truth, to speak those things only which are true. And pray, Madam, said she, how do you know that? You must confess, my dear aunt, I have asked you a question that you can by no means answer. What you have said may be your opinion, and I doubt not but it is; but another person may be of a contrary opinion, and who can tell which of the two opinions is right?

I have no cause to wonder, Miranda, said her aunt, at the disorder of your mind, since you manifest yourself to be an unbeliever. Alas, I fear you are among the number of those, whose minds, like a troubled sea, cast up mire and dirt; and concerning whom God hath declared,

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that there is no peace to them. You seem to suppose, that the infidel has as good ground to believe Divine Revelation to be false, as I have to believe it to be true. Indeed you are sadly mistaken. I have as strong evidence of the truth of Revelation, as I have that I am now in your company; for though the evidence be not of the same kind, yet it is equally convincing. The Scriptures, to them who have an eye to see, and a taste to relish their excellency, carry conviction of their divine origin in almost every line. Like their Almighty Author, they need no testimony from man. I beg, therefore, if you have any objections to the truth of God's word, that you will let me hear them.

Indeed, Madam, replied the young lady, I scarcely know what I doubt, or what I believe. Of this only I am certain, that I am unhappy; and your proving to me the truth of Revelation, if you could do it, would only plunge me deeper into misery, or, if I may quote Scripture, torment me before the time. But I had rather say nothing about these things, the very mentioning of which heightens my distress.

Mrs. Worthington perceived the case of her niece to be much more deplorable than she had at first imagined. She said no more, however, at this time, since she rightly judged that it would be in vain to make use of any arguments, taken out of the Scriptures, to a person who did not believe those divine writings. The good woman wept, and offered up many ejaculatory prayers to God; for though she herself had no power to open the blind eyes, and to unstop the deaf ears, she well knew that with Him nothing is impossible.

Miss Barnwell had several friends and acquaintances in London, who came to visit her at her aunt's. They took her with them to all the public places, and did every thing in their power to make her stay agreeable. But the fear of a hereafter was gall and wormwood in these cups of pleasure. Whatever infidels may boast of, they have not half the assurance of the falsity of Revelation to which

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they pretend; they labour indeed to disbelieve its authenticity, yet are distressed with ten thousand fears lest, after all, it should be true. This was exactly the case of this young lady. She would have been thankful to beg her bread from door to door her whole lifetime, could she have had the consolation of being certain that there was no God—no Christ—no hereafter. Her aunt took every opportunity to lay before her the various evidences of the truth of the Christian religion, but without effect; since it is with great difficulty we are brought to believe that to be true, which we wish to be false. Besides, she had already made so many unsuccessful attempts to be a Christian, that she looked upon it as a fruitless undertaking; for what the Holy Spirit has declared, will ever be found true upon trial, that when the Ethiopian can change his skin, and the leopard his spots, then they also who have been accustomed to do evil, may learn to do good. This lady did not yet understand, that the tree must be first made good before it can produce good fruit. The true state of her case was this. Like many others, she had endeavoured to establish her own righteousness; which while she was doing, God graciously laid the reins on her neck, and left her in some measure to herself, that she might perceive her natural depravity, and her inability to keep his law.

Several weeks elapsed without any alteration in her for the better. At length one night, after she had retired to her chamber, she took out of her pocket a volume of plays, as she thought, to pass away the time before she went to bed, as she was not disposed for sleep; but having laid down her book in the kitchen, she had, through mistake, taken up a volume of sermons of the same size, which belonged to one of the maids. Curiosity led her to look at the titles of the sermons, and at the texts from which they were preached; and her attention was attracted by one from these words: (Rom. iii. 20.) *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* She chose to read this

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stranger, because she could not conceive how a person could be justified any otherwise than by obeying God's righteous law. The author began by shewing, that justification is a law-term, and is applied to those, who, being tried by the laws of their country, are found innocent of the crimes laid to their charge; and that in this sense no sinner can be justified at God's righteous bar, because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. His second observation was, that all those whom God justifies, or proclaims righteous, must necessarily be sinners and ungodly persons, because the law condemns all the posterity of Adam, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. He proceeded to shew, that the whole scope of Divine Revelation is, that God has sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and both condemned and punished sin in his flesh, that every sinner, whose understanding the Holy Spirit has opened to believe cordially this report, may be justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law, which, as the apostle observes in the text, can do nothing more than discover to us our transgressions.

This was a time never to be forgotten. This young lady now beheld such a glory in the whole plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, that she could have truly said with the apostle Peter, *I believe and am sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;* or with Nathaniel, *Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.* The evidence of the truth of Christianity, like an overflowing deluge, bore away every doubt. Before, she had seen no form nor comeliness in Christ that she should desire him; and the glorious gospel of his grace and mercy to guilty sinners, had been a sealed book to her. In her former attempts to please God, the blood of Christ had made no part of her religion; or at most had been considered only as an auxiliary. But now, the language of her soul was like that of Paul, *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:* and her utmost wish, like that of the apostle, was to be found

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in him, not having her own righteousness. It is impossible to describe her joy, for it was unspeakable. She appeared to herself as one snatched from the gates of hell, and set at the gates of heaven: and had not this exuberant transport vented itself in floods of tears, it would probably have dissolved her frame. She had such magnificent views of the fulness and freeness of redemption, that if the sins of the whole human race had centered in her own person, she would have considered the blood of Christ as a sufficient atonement for them all. Prayer and praise became her constant employ, whether she was at home or abroad, asleep or awake.

Mrs. Worthington soon perceived the great change which had taken place in the mind of her niece; for such things will soon manifest themselves, even though we should do all in our power to keep them secret. The good lady exceedingly rejoiced, and did not forget to return thanks to God for the answer he had given to her prayers. She gave her many excellent instructions, and found her employment in reading some of the best authors on divine subjects. She also took her to hear several gospel preachers of different denominations, opportunities of this kind offering themselves almost every day in the week; so that she lost in a little time all the bigotry in which she had been educated. She closely applied herself to study the grounds of the Reformation from Popery, as well as the reasons for dissenting from the Church of England, with which reasons she was fully satisfied. Notwithstanding she knew how much her father abhorred all those who left the church, and turned Presbyterians, by which common name of reproach he called all Dissenters, yet she determined to have one thing only in view, namely, to follow the dictates of her conscience so far as it was enlightened by Divine Revelation, and to leave the event with God; for like the apostle Paul, she did not count her life dear unto herself, so that she might finish her course with joy. She did not conceive that any evil could be equal to a state of unbelief and alienation from God, hav-

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ing had dreadful experience of what Solomon had in view when he said, *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?*

Mrs. Worthington, walking one day with her niece in the fields, said to her, I form great hopes, my dear Miranda, that yours will prove a real conversion to God: I say real; for conversion, like other excellent things, has its counterfeits. Many followed Christ, concerning whom we read, that they went back, and walked no more with him. In the parable of the sower, likewise, some are represented as receiving the word with joy, who yet endured but a while. I will not however conceal from you, that they did not understand the word which they pretended to believe. Our Lord himself assigns this as the reason of their apostacy. They manifested their ignorance and unbelief, when their present ease, the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, in a time of trial, outweighed in their judgment the things of eternity. Temptations of this kind, however, are the lot of every Christian, that the trial of our faith may be much more precious than of gold that perisheth.

Nothing, Madam, replied Miss Barnwell, has so much allayed my happiness, as the fear of relapsing into my former unbelief: not even death itself would be half so dreadful.

I am glad to hear it, said Mrs. Worthington; I trust this is that childlike fear, which is implanted in the breasts of all who are born from above, and which is intended by the Divine Donor to be a preservative in time of danger. Every creature of God has some defence against its enemies. The majestic lion, and the timid hare, are alike provided for by their beneficent Creator: to the one he has given strength and courage; to the other swiftness and fear. As the fear therefore of the hare is its security, so God has put his fear into the hearts of his children, that they may not depart from him. The martyrs of Jesus were no fonder of sufferings and death than other mortals. They only chose racks and gibbets, the teeth of wild beasts, and the

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burning of their bodies as smaller evils. The favour of God on the one hand, and his just displeasure on the other, outweighed every other consideration.

I pray, said Miranda, that God may number me among his children, and that I may endure to the end.

It is my earnest desire, replied her aunt, that that may be the case. In the meantime I would have you observe, that the manner of a person's conversion weighs nothing with me. If God in his mercy bring a poor sinner unfeignedly to believe the gospel, because he perceives the finger of God in every line; if the gospel be to him a precious gospel, and Christ a precious Christ; the manner in which those sentiments are conveyed by the Spirit of God cannot be improper. Some are led to sit at the feet of Jesus by slow and almost imperceptible degrees; whilst others, like you, are brought to heaven by the gates of hell. Yet the means and the end are the same in both, and only differ in degree; since all who are born from above, understand and approve the Scriptures as they speak of Christ. Salvation by one who was crucified, is no longer disregarded, or esteemed as foolishness; but it is accounted by them the power of God, and the wisdom of God. They are renewed in knowledge, after the image of him who created them: they approve of the things which he approves, and hate the things which he hates. They take his yoke upon them; and are determined, by his assistance, to make his revealed will, so far as they understand it, the rule of their faith and practice.

O that I may be enabled, said this young lady, to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, through good report, and through evil report! In his favour only there is life. He is the ark of my rest, and unto him I cannot but return; since, like Noah's dove, I can find no place upon earth which is not overflowed by the curse.

Yes, my dear, replied Mrs. Worthington, thorns and thistles, troubles and disappointments, is it bringing forth to all its children; but to us it is an enemy's country, a parched wilderness, and a barren desert. Nevertheless,

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he who hath delivered us from spiritual Egypt, will guide and guard us on every side; he will cause us to drink of the smitten rock, and to feed upon the true bread which came down from heaven. These things were types or shadows of the superior blessings which God's people were to enjoy under the gospel dispensation. The Lord of hosts will fight all our battles for us, as he did for the Israelites, and will make us more than conquerors through him that loved us. Let every Christian, therefore, cry out with Moses, *If thy presence go not with us, take us not up hence.*—I foresee, my dear Miranda, that you will have many difficulties to encounter, but remember, that we can both do and suffer all things through Christ strengthening us. After the conflict is over, let us join the sweet singers of Israel in songs of praise to him who smote great kings, for his mercy endureth for ever. The world and Satan, like the enemies of the Israelites, will endeavour to obstruct our passage to the heavenly Canaan; and we shall be able to gain a victory over them, only through the same Jehovah, who is the Captain of our salvation. I have long known your father; he not only has no taste for divine things, but he is enmity against them.

I thought, Madam, replied Miss Barnwell, that you had this in view: but God is able to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, as well as the heart of the children to the fathers.

He can do every thing, answered Mrs. Worthington; but in the mean time there will be need of great prudence on your part, as well as of a becoming resolution. You must join the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. You are not, I trust, the same person you were; old things are passed away, and all things are become new; yet your father will expect you to behave as you have always done. I don't say that every amusement is inconsistent with Christianity; but this I say, that every thing is unlawful which we cannot do to the glory of God. Our pleasures, as well as every other thing we engage in, we should endeavour to make subservient to

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our eternal interest. How innocent, for instance, is this walk, as well as pleasant and healthful! How much is it to be preferred to those guilty pleasures, by which thousands are ruining their health and fortunes! Here every creature of God, animate and inanimate, is teaching some useful lesson to those who are disposed to learn. That poor, despised ass, the poverty of whose owner obliges him to feed by the way-side, on thistles and other weeds, reminds us of the meek and lowly Son of God, riding upon this animal, and entering triumphantly into Jerusalem amid the acclamations of his followers; which was a prelude to his entering upon his heavenly inheritance by the ignominious death of the cross. The useful, harmless sheep, whose flesh feeds us, and whose fleece secures us from the cold, puts me in mind of the Saviour of the world, who was led as a sheep to the slaughter; while the meek and innocent lambs call to my remembrance the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. The noble, well-proportioned horse, I consider as the gift of God, to ease our labour, and to bear part of our curse. The cow I behold with pleasure and gratitude. When I meet those useful creatures in an evening returning to their owners, their breath sweet as the rose, and their udders distended with balmy nectar, I view them as one of the kindest gifts of Providence; since here the poor have provided for them a cheap, salubrious, and delicious repast: a repast, how infinitely superior to costly dainties, contrived with a view to gratify a depraved appetite; in which gratification too often consists the sad pre-eminence of riches. Wherever we are, we cannot look around us without perceiving the goodness and munificence of the great Creator; of that immense Being, who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works. Those little birds, though they have neither storehouse nor barn, are liberally provided for by an unseen hand. One would be almost tempted to think that they were sensible of the goodness of him who feeds them, and that they were warbling songs of praise. At

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least, they teach us, my dear, to bless that God, who hitherto has helped us, and who is the author of all our mercies. The trees, also, the succulent herbage, and the hills and vallies standing thick with corn, proclaim that every creature is subject to the will of Jehovah; otherwise, what is in itself so unlikely to provide food for man and beast as the clods of the valley, the dirt that we trample under our feet? Contemplations like these are not only innocent, but exquisite gratifications: they refresh the spirits, gladden the heart, and leave no sting behind them.

I desire, Madam, said Miss Barnwell, to engage in nothing wherein I cannot pray for and expect the divine blessing. As Jesus is all my salvation, so may a conformity to him be my earnest desire.

It is your reasonable service, my child, replied Mrs. Worthington: nor indeed is there any other medium, by which we can distinguish a real faith from one that is counterfeit or nominal.

Thus did this excellent lady take every opportunity to establish her niece in the great truths of the gospel; and the mind of this young lady, like that of Lydia, was opened and influenced to receive the good seed of the word; so that she soon made a great proficiency in divine knowledge.

Mr. Barnwell kept a noble house, and was visited by the best company, as they would be termed by the world. But his daughter had so far lost her inclination for things of this kind, that she frequently told her aunt there was not any thing which she dreaded equally to returning home. While she was meditating on the difficulties she had to encounter, her father arrived in town, with an intention to take his passage in the first ship that should sail for Jamaica. The overseer of his estate in that island being dead, his presence was necessary, that he might superintend his affairs.

After waiting in London about a week, he embarked in a vessel, the captain of which was his intimate friend. This

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sudden departure of a father whom she tenderly loved, was a great grief to Miranda. But her aunt consoled her, by observing, that she looked upon it as a kind providence; since, before his return, she hoped she would be better established in the faith, and more able to cope with those difficulties which she had reason to expect would be the result of her change of sentiment.

As Mr. Barnwell was unable to conjecture how long he would be absent, he dismissed all his servants, except the housekeeper, gardener, and groom, and left his plate at the house of Mr. Pink, an acquaintance of his, who lived in the parish. He desired his daughter to continue with her aunt till his return. He remarked, that she had not recovered her vivacity; but this he imputed to some remains of her disorder: for it was impossible that Mr. Barnwell should conceive, stranger as he was to real religion, that any one should be cheerful and happy, if he were not gay, brisk and merry.

Miss Barnwell spent her time at her needle, in reading the Holy Scriptures, in attending upon divine worship, and in conversing with her aunt, who was a lady of an excellent understanding.

Of all her acquaintance in the country, there were none whom she esteemed equally to the Miss Nevilles: indeed their regard for each other was sincere; and as they lived but four miles asunder, and the road was good, they were frequently together. From these young ladies she received several letters upon common-place subjects, and about the news of the day, to which she returned answers of a similar kind. But when she had been with her aunt about nine months, she ventured to touch on a religious subject. The following is an extract from her letter:

"You tell me the country is mopish and melancholy without me. But indeed, ladies, if you expect that kind of pleasure in my company which you formerly experienced, you will be mistaken. I am no longer the Miranda Barnwell I was. Eternity, my dear friends, is coming on with hasty steps, to take place of time: our fleeting moments,

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therefore, ought to be better employed than in vain amusements. I pray that my dear young friends may escape the wrath to come; and that they may be convinced, that nothing can recommend them to the divine favour, but the obedience and sufferings of the Redeemer; since they only are the righteousness, in which a guilty sinner can appear at the awful tribunal of God with comfort. I too well know, that you will think it impertinent in me to undertake to teach you in things of this nature; but I should think any longer silence inexcusable in the sight of God: and henceforth it is He whom I intend first and chiefly to please.

"The singular respect I have for you, ladies, induces me to pray the Father of mercies, that you may be led to examine upon what your hope of eternal life is founded. Believe, me, my dear friends, or rather believe the word of God, that it is not a penance prescribed, nor an absolution pronounced, either by a Catholic or Protestant priest, which can take away sins; that can only be effected by the blood of Jesus Christ."

LETTER I.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR MISS BARNWELL,

WE received your kind letter, the conclusion of which as much surprised me, as it displeased my sister. I believe I may safely confess to my friend, that she and I are so far agreed as to have one hope of eternal life Yes, my dear Miranda, I am, through the mercy of God, fully convinced, that nothing can recommend me to the divine favour but the obedience and atonement of the Redeemer. I perceive that this truth is the great outline of the Old and New Testament, however it may be rejected by the

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wise and prudent of this world. I beg you will pray for me, that I may be led into all truth by the Holy Spirit, and that fortitude and resolution may be given me. I feel myself to be very weak; and should utterly despair, did I not hope and trust that the grace of Christ will prove sufficient for me, and that his strength will be made perfect in my weakness. If my brother, my dear brother, were at home, I could unbosom myself to him; but I dare not take that liberty with my sister, who is extremely violent against every sentiment which she esteems heretical. The same prejudice was in me: but now I believe, that no opinion ought either to be embraced or rejected, because it is held by this or that party.

I have now no doubt that there are many Christians among protestants, although formerly I should have considered any one as a heretic who had asserted it. Having been acquainted with Protestants of a very bad kind, when I compared their lives with that strictness and zeal for God which were visible in my own family, you will not wonder that I preferred our own religion to yours. I can however perceive, notwithstanding all this strictness in the repetition of prayers, in fasting, in almsgiving, and in every thing enjoined by the church, in which my honoured parent is unwearied, that yet something is wanting. Yes, Miranda, through the mercy of God, I have discovered, that a person may give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burned, and yet be destitute of that true charity, or love to God, which is essential to religion. And not only so, but the love of God itself has many counterfeits. I used to derive my notions concerning God and Christ from pictures and images, endeavouring to work up my mind to a love and veneration of them as thereby represented. But I thank the father of mercies, that I now perceive my error, and am convinced that the works and the word of God are the only true representation of the invisible Jehovah. The love of God's mind and will revealed to the children of men, is the genuine love of God; and the love of what Christ said and did, and of what he is now

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doing, is the love of Christ.—I spoke in this manner some time past to my sister; and she thinking it a reflection on images, pronounced it to be heresy. By this argument I have been frequently confuted. I am indeed a coward. I don't know how I could be a martyr for Christ: but my hope is, that my God will give me strength equal to my trials.

I lately told my sister, that I doubted whether the consecrated elements of bread and wine were proper objects of worship, admitting that they were transubstantiated into the real body and blood of Christ; since it was God manifest in the flesh who was the proper object of divine worship, and not the flesh in which he was manifested.

You make me tremble, Eusebia, cried she: such heretical thoughts ought to be repressed.

Are we, my dear sister, replied I, never to see through our own eyes? Are we never to judge for ourselves? Ought we not to examine whether a thing be false, before we consider whether it be heretical?

By no means, replied she. This would be to begin at the wrong end. We ought first to examine whether it be heretical; and if we find it to be heretical, we ought then to conclude that it is false. Would it not be presumption to set up our own private judgment against the determinations of the church?

I was silent. Perhaps it was my duty to be so; as there was no appearance that by continuing the conversation, I could render her any service.

Your letter, my dear friend, gave me much pleasure; for I have here no one to converse with, except a poor man and his wife, named Livingstone. These I have discovered to be real Christians; and their conversation has been very instructive to me. They are now in the lowest circumstances, but have seen better days; though he would scarcely allow the propriety of that expression. I once intimated something of this kind to him, and he replied, that his God and Father had chosen his portion for him, and that he believed that station to be the best, all

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things considered, in which providence has placed him. He is a Dissenter, and goes every Sunday to hear a person at Barnwell whose name is Lowe, and he speaks very much in praise of his minister.

O Miranda! I should be happy if my dear parent did but know and love the truth as well as Thomas Livingstone, even if he were in the same circumstances. Alas! what is the most exalted sphere of life to us, if we are ignorant of the true God, and enemies to salvation by the death of Christ? My dear father is all that I could wish as a man. His benevolence to the poor, of all denominations, is far beyond any thing I have seen, and equals any thing I have read of. But alas, as faith without works is dead, so works without faith are dead also.

I am exceedingly happy in the company of Thomas and his good wife, and whenever I can steal an hour in the evening I spend it with them. How magnificent appears in my eyes the little cottage wherein they reside. 'There dwell, say I to myself, two heirs of eternal glory'; while many a superb mansion is disgraced by being the habitation of the sons of Belial;—of men, who evidently have their portion in this life. O that God may be my portion! This is all I ask. A little cottage like this of my friend Livingstone's, with the divine presence and blessing, I trust I should not consider as too humble a dwelling. That place cannot be dishonourable where God resides.

I beg you will purchase for me the Nonconformists' Memorial. I saw it at a house in our village, and borrowed it for a short time. Among these sufferers for the cause of Christ, I found Christians of a very different stamp to those I had hitherto been acquainted with in the church of England. I have not sufficient fortitude to inform my dear father of my change of sentiment, lest it should overwhelm him with grief. Whatever befall me, spare, O my God, I beseech thee, my dear parent! It is my consolation that thou canst do every thing.

I need not desire my friend to show this letter to no person except Mrs. Worthington. I have long known her

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to be a prudent lady. Would it be right for me to take the liberty of requesting a letter from her? Please to direct your letter to Thomas Livingstone, as well as the books, for which I shall thankfully repay you.

Pray present my kind respects to Mrs. Worthington, and accept the same from, my dear Miranda,

Your affectionate friend,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER II.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR YOUNG LADY,

I AM unable to describe our joy at the receipt of your letter. My niece was so delighted, that her pleasure could no otherwise vent itself than by a flood of tears. She has received great mercy at the hands of God, and it is natural for such to rejoice when a subject is added to the Redeemer's kingdom. The deliverance of a sinner from the power of Satan gives joy to the angels of God. They know the importance of the divine favour, and the dreadful nature of the divine displeasure.

It is the duty of every disciple of Jesus to take up his cross and follow him. The christian is not, however, without his reward; for to those who forego any worldly advantage for his sake, our Lord has promised a hundred fold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting. And although he has permitted many of his servants to be put to a violent death in the defence of his cause, the support which he has afforded them in those fiery trials has far outweighed all their sufferings. Where shall we find, among the votaries of festivity and mirth, that real joy which was experienced by Paul and Silas when their feet were fastened in the stocks? The thoughts

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of suffering for Christ ought not to move us, since every condition in life is that only to us which God is pleased to make it.

My counsel, therefore, is, that you commit yourself to the protection of the Almighty. Do that which appears to be your duty; learn that duty from the Scriptures; and be not anxious about the consequences. Meditate on the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews; remember the three children in the fiery furnace; and consider that the Lord's hand is not shortened that he cannot save, nor his ear heavy that he cannot hear.

I rejoice that you are in such good company as that of Thomas Livingstone and his wife. Pray give my kind love to those friends of the Redeemer. I observe, with pleasure, your willingness to be contented with as humble a dwelling as that of those good people. This disposition is right; since we do not know what an adherance to the Saviour may cost us.

My niece has bought the Nonconformists' Memorial for you. I must beg your acceptance of the works of Archbishop Leighton. He was a pattern of humility, and of love to Christ and to the souls of men. But that good man did not see the nature of Christ's church or kingdom, which, not being of this world, cannot be governed by worldly maxims. The moment the alliance commenced between church and state, antichristianism was established, and the man of sin was exalted into the throne of him, who is the only Lord and Lawgiver of his people.

My dear niece is happy in her mind, and her health is much improved. She has learned that best of lessons, to joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ: but I shall say the less on this subject, as she intends to write to you.

Cannot you come and stay with us two or three months? It would give us great pleasure, and might not be disadvantageous to you.

I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, and am, my dear young Lady,

Your sincere friend,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

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LETTER III.

From Miss Barnwell to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR EUSEBIA,

I HAVE read your letter with very great pleasure. O my friend, if we examine what is called the Christian world, how few shall we find who so far understand and believe divine revelation as to be convinced that Jesus is the only Saviour of guilty sinners, and who manifest that they are in earnest, by yielding an unreserved submission to his government! I rejoice that this is your case, and I would humbly hope my own likewise. Here, my friend, we may lay the reins on the neck of Ambition. However vast our expectations, or unbounded our wishes, they will be gratified beyond our utmost conception; since it has never entered into the heart of man to conceive what God has prepared for them that love him. I frequently wish for the arrival of that happy time, when I shall see him whom my soul loveth as I am seen of him, and know him as I am known of him. In the meanwhile, what have we to hope or fear from the sons and daughters of the earth? We must not expect that they will treat us better than they did the Lord of life and glory. No one, however, can hold up his hand against us without his permission.

I know my dear Eusebia has much to fear from her father; not more, however, than I have to fear from mine. But say, will these things bear to be put in the balance against the favour of God here, and the enjoyment of him hereafter? They are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. When we begin to turn our backs upon the world, and to set our faces Zionward, we ought daily to expect some cross or other; and we must be willing to carry it, even as the Redeemer carried his, and as the saints in glory have carried theirs. A crown is prepared; but the road to it is by the cross. In

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a word, if we are Christians, we must not only be willing to be saved by the work finished by the Redeemer upon the cross, but we must also enter his kingdom, as he entered it, through much tribulation. Whether, therefore, our names be cast out as evil by Catholics or Protestants, the difference is small; and I pray that neither of us may be discouraged above measure; since thousands of the children of God have testified, that reproaches for the name and truth of Christ, together with prisons, racks, gibbets and flames, are much alleviated by those divine consolations which the Redeemer affords to his suffering servants, and which are infinitely preferable to the most prosperous circumstances of those who have their portion in this life.

I have used no argument, my dear Eusebia, to induce you to leave the church of Rome. Whatever you find in that community that is agreeable to the word of God, continue to embrace; and whatever is contrary to it, reject. The last indeed may be attended with the great displeasure of your father and sister; but if God have given you an understanding to know him that is true, he who is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, will appear so amiable to you, that you will esteem even the reproach you meet with on his account more than all the treasures upon earth; yea, my friend will not esteem her life dear, if she must either part with it, or be disobedient to his commands.

I wish soon to hear from you again. Be assured that I am, my dear Eusebia,

Yours in our common Father and Friend,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

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LETTER IV.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I THANKFULLY received your kind present together with the book which I wished my friend to procure for me. I have at present looked very little into the works of the good archbishop: but wherever I have read, I have found a true spirit of piety, joined with great knowledge of the subject on which he treated.

I desire my friends to pray for me, that my faith and hope may be strengthened, and that I may not faint in the day of adversity. In your kind letters, for which also I return thanks, you labour to make me understand how unworthy the sufferings of the present time are to be compared with the following glory. But alas, how little have you said! How little could angels say upon this subject! O that time could mend its pace, that I might put off this body, and enter into that world of everlasting felicity. But if I must abide in a world so much unlike that to which I am travelling, I pray that I may not be left to dishonour my Lord, by doing or submitting to any thing that is contrary to his will, through the fear of those that can only kill the body.

I am obliged to confess to you, my friends, that I cannot see my way clear at present to renounce the religion in which I have been educated. It is true, that in a long series of years, the gospel has been gradually corrupted among us: but is the religion of Protestants uncorrupt? You, my dear friends, will not affirm it. Education makes a lasting impression on young minds. You will not wonder therefore when I tell you, that as soon as my friend Thomas Livingstone has answered one objection, another springs up in its room. Had I the pleasure to be with Mrs. Worthington, or Miss Barnwell, I should ask them,

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1. Where the church of Christ was before Luther?

2. Which of all the numerous sects of Protestants is the true church?

3. Whether a center of unity is not wanting among Protestants?

4. Whether to prevent confusion, public interpreters of Scripture be not necessary? especially as the apostle St. Peter tells us, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

My friend has answered these questions several times, and it is possible very properly; but old prejudices, he observes, are rooted up with great difficulty; and I have reason to believe it. However, I would not on any account leave the religion of my ancestors entirely, without the most undoubted proof that it is the divine will that I should do so. But should it ever appear plain to me, that I must either abandon the church of Rome, and submit to be abhorred by my friends, and to be turned into the wide world, or displease my Lord and Saviour, I pray that I may not be so far lost to a just sense of my true interest, as to require a moment's consideration which to prefer. But I dare not confide in my own strength. I remember St. Peter's confidence, as well as his fall, which naturally succeeded it. Indeed, my dear friends, I am many times distressed with fears, lest when it comes to the trial, I should imitate those persons who went away, and walked no more with the Redeemer.

Apprehensions also of a more alarming nature, if possible, frequently distress me, namely, lest the word of God should be a cunningly devised fable. When such horrid temptations have invaded my mind, my only relief has been to pour out my soul in prayer to God. Tranquillity, and a well-grounded hope of the truth of the Scriptures, have generally ensued: but new storms have frequently succeeded these calms.

I am greatly obliged to you, Madam, for your kind invitation. I should have no doubt of being happy in such agreeable company; but my father, and sister, and father

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Albino our priest, set out this morning for Bath, where I expect them to stay six weeks or two months; so that I only am left to keep house.

When I write to either of my friends, they must consider it as to both. Pray give my kind love to my dear Miss Barnwell, and accept the same from, dear Madam,

Your much obliged friend,
And very humble servant,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER V.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR YOUNG LADY,

THE glorious views you have of the felicity which awaits the friends of the Redeemer, cannot be indifferent to them who also hope to enjoy those blessings, which no eye hath seen nor heart conceived, except in a partial and inadequate manner. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and the pleasure we derive from obedience to his commands, are an earnest of our inheritance, and a foretaste of the happiness of that kingdom where our work will be our reward.

I pray for you, my dear friend, that you may never do any thing deliberately to dishonour the cause of Christ. Having put your hand to the gospel plough, you cannot look back but at your peril. Remember Lot's wife. We are embarked in a good cause: and although, from the violence of the winds and waves, we may apprehend that ourselves and our cause are sinking, there is one with us in the vessel who can again say, Peace, be still. Your fear that you should go from Christ, and walk no more with him, God has put into your heart, lest you should depart from him. It operates like the fear of the disciples, who said,

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Lord save us, we perish. Every thing is a blessing, however painful it may be, which leads us to a throne of grace. Were it not for our calamities, God would have much less of our company.

The dreadful suggestions of Satan, that the Scriptures may prove a fable, are very distressing. But console yourself with reflecting, that they are not only more or less experienced by Christians in general, but that they are among the all-things that work together for their good. Many have been induced, and even compelled, through such temptations, to be fervent in prayer, and diligent in searching the Scriptures, which have never sustained any dishonour from an impartial and judicious examination. Speculative unbelievers are far less numerous than practical: the transition, however, is easy from one to the other. Every unregenerate man is an unbeliever; but the strong man armed seldom disturbs his subjects with doubts concerning the truth of a religion which has no practical influence upon them. When inquisitive unbelievers search the Scriptures, they do it, either in hopes of proving them to be entirely false, or with a determination to reject such doctrines as are contrary to unsanctified reason: and the god of this world blinds their minds, lest the light of the gospel should shine unto them.

The Old Testament is the foundation on which the New is built; and they will stand or fall together. To-morrow is the thirtieth of January, a day observed with much solemnity by many persons in the church of England. Should this service continue for a hundred ages, it would be a proof of the existence and sufferings of Charles I. Do not the Passover, and other Jewish festivals, equally prove the truth of the historical facts to which they owed their origin? The Jews in every country continue to commemorate those facts; and as well might we deny the gunpowder-plot, an annual commemoration of which is maintained throughout England, as dispute those divine deliverances which are annually and universally celebrated by the descendants of Jacob. The Lord's supper also is a

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standing proof, not merely that he was crucified, but likewise that he foretold his crucifixion, and appointed this ordinance as a memorial of it. When our Lord died, the number of his disciples was about a hundred and twenty. It is incredible that so many men should have agreed to commemorate frequently the crucifixion of their Lord, in professed obedience to his command, if such a command had never been given.

Please to give my kind love to Thomas Livingstone and his wife. I shall inclose something in this letter to alleviate their sufferings in this inclement season.

That God may strengthen and support you to bear every thing which he shall permit you to suffer for his name, is the prayer of, my dear young Lady,

Your sincere friend,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER VI.

From Miss Barnwell to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR EUSEBIA,

My aunt, who has a very great regard for you, desired me to answer that part of your letter which contains your doubts, whether you ought or ought not to leave the church of Rome. This was doing me very little honour, since she told me there was no difficulty attending it. For, said she, they must be very indifferent scholars indeed in the school of Christ, who cannot demonstrate that national churches are in their own nature unfriendly to Christianity.

The good confession which our Lord witnessed before Pontius Pilate was this, *My kingdom is not of this world.* His church, which is his kingdom, he has upholden in the midst of the nations, as he supported the children of Israel

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in the wilderness; his servants have always dwelt alone, and will never be reckoned among the nations.

1. You ask, Where the church of Christ was before Luther? I ask, in return, where is it now? And I answer myself, that there are three members of this church at Thornton: Miss Eusebia Neville, and our good friends Thomas Livingstone and his wife. The Redeemer has many thousands scattered over Great-Britain and Ireland, and the neighbouring nations, known by various names of reproach, who are marked with his seal, supported by his arms, and kept as the apple of his eye; and, however they may be reviled and hated by the world, not a hair of their heads will perish. My friend, I dare say, has heard of those heretics, the Hussites in Germany, the Waldenses and Albigenses in the vallies of Piedmont and the south of France, and the Wickliffites in England. We have reason to believe, that all the persecuted professors in those times, with very few exceptions, were real Christians: for hypocrites, in general, leave the profession of religion, when there is neither personal safety, nor ease, nor honour, nor riches attending it.—Your next question is,

2. Which of all the numerous sects of Protestants is the true church? In answer, I need only ask you, which of the seven churches of the lesser Asia was the true church? You will reply, that most, if not all of them, were both praiseworthy and blameworthy. And so it is with regard to the churches of Christ in these kingdoms; though I fear too many of them are like the Laodiceans, who said they were rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing, and knew not that they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. The case is this: the church of Christ in these nations has long had peace; professors are in a sleepy frame; the enemy has sowed tares among the wheat; and there are many hypocrites in Zion. This is the calamity of God's children in this day; for they must have a cross to carry of some kind or other. That society of Christians, there-

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fore, is most to be commended, whether it be great or small, where the laws of Christ are best understood and observed, and where the gospel is least corrupted by tradition, old wives' fables, and false glosses.—You further ask,

3. Whether Protestants do not stand in need of a center of union to supply the place of the bishop of Rome? I answer, the Redeemer is the only center of union to his people. They are entirely upon a level. There is no inferior among them; and as Christians, they have no superior but him who is the head of all principality and power. They are united to the Redeemer, and to each other, by their love to him, and to the truth which testifies of him. He is their prophet to teach them, their priest to atone for their iniquities, and their king to rule over them. They dare not unite themselves to any other head, nor call any man master upon earth; for they have a master in heaven, their Lord and lawgiver, who only has dominion over his servants: and if any usurper of their Lord's authority should command them to break his laws, it becomes them rather to lay down their lives than dishonour him by a base compliance. When the nations of this world put on the profession of Christianity, the Antichristian spirit which had before worked secretly in a desire of preeminence, became rampant, and was as terrible as a dragon. From the moment that the clergy were raised by Christian kings (as they were called) to honour, wealth, and power, the history of the church has been little other than a history of the struggles of ambitious men. Every one wanted to lord it over his brethren. But at length, after many struggles for wealth and power, the bishop of Rome obtained the ascendency, and became the center of union, the head of the great body of Antichrist, or of those men who called themselves Christians, though they possessed neither the truth nor the spirit of Christ. And although the bishop of Rome has lost his authority in several countries of Europe, yet his spirit and temper will reign, as long as a corrupt Christianity shall be propagated by a

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dignified clergy, who [illegible] of the Lamb; for, in from the kings of the e[illegible] spirit, and their chants who are repres[illegible] otherwise com-trading in the souls of [illegible] God shall come upon B[illegible] ould be harlots, on account of her [illegible] sa-people, these merchants w[illegible] shall weep and wail on acc[illegible]

that their priests sh[illegible] covetous and mur[illegible] This church, [illegible] upon a scar[illegible] having [illegible] the [illegible] it

If you think it strange, n[illegible] powers in every Christian [illegible] the same error of support[illegible] mercenary clergy, and of suffering them to be briars and thorns in the sides of God's people, we can only say that it is agreeable to the divine prediction. In the book of Revelation, the kings of the earth are represented as having one mind, so far at least as to give their power and strength unto the beast. Ah, Eusebia, if I were a pope, or arch-bishop, or lord-bishop, knowing what I know, I should soon destroy the ensigns of my authority, and return to a private station, however mean and despicable that station might be.

But you will ask me, Why the Antichristian powers are represented as a beast? I answer, Because of their bloody, dreadful, and tyrannical rule and dominion. The Redeemer, on account of his just, meek, and merciful government, is represented as a lamb.

This Antichristian society, is also called the Man of Sin, to distinguish it from the New Man, or from the family of the Redeemer, who are created anew in Christ Jesus, or after the image of him who created them. This false church is represented as a Harlot, and the Mother of harlots, in opposition to the true church, which is the Bride, the Lamb's wife. Her illicit connexion with the kings of the earth is sometimes called the Alliance between Church and State. When the kings of the nations put on the Christian name, their subjects, at their command, became Christians nominally likewise. We need not wonder that these people blended their heathenish customs and idolatry with a nominal Christianity, nor

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fore, is most to be could graft their former ambitious,
small, where the derous practices on their new religion.
observed, and erefore, is represented as a woman riding
dition, old et-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy,
ask, even heads and ten horns, denoting the powers of
3 arth by which she was supported. *And the woman,*
is said, *was arrayed in purple, and in scarlet colour, and was decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls; and she had a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication; and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth. And I saw,* says the apostle, *the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw, I wondered with great admiration.* Rev xvii. 4—6. And well might the apostle wonder, a Christian persecuting church being one of the most monstrous things in nature.

Pray, Eusebia, tell me, what churches have been drunken with the blood of the saints beside national churches; or what church upon earth has upon its forehead the mark of that mysterious Babylon, except those who are in spiritual alliance with the kings of the earth. The time will come, when those kings shall hate the false church, and shall make her desolate and naked; that is, shall resume the possessions with which they have endowed her. It is then the friends of Jesus may expect that prophecy to be accomplished in their favour, wherein it is foretold by Isaiah, that kings shall be their nursing-fathers, and queens their nursing-mothers; which prophecy seems to denote, that the civil powers will be so far influenced by the Spirit of God in their favour, as to protect them in their undoubted right of worshipping the great Lord of all, agreeably to the rules prescribed in his word.

Lastly, I ought to remind my friend, that there are more numerous and more important differences among those who have popes or kings for the bond of their union,

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than there are among the followers of the Lamb; for, in fact, the latter have all drunk into one spirit, and their differences are either about words, or are otherwise comparatively small.—In your last question you ask,

4. Whether it is not necessary that there should be public interpreters of Scripture? I answer, It is necessary; and such are God's gifts to his church. He only can make his servants able ministers of the New Testament. Therefore our Lord commands his followers to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send labourers into his harvest. But observe my friend, that all such are taught of God; and that a college (as human nature now stands) is not well calculated to teach our youth Christianity: for experience shows, that a great number of youth trained up together corrupt one another.

But, you tell me, Peter says, that no prophecy of the Scripture is any private interpretation. To this I answer, that the apostle's inference is sufficient to convince an unlearned reader that it is a wrong translation. Read the words in the following manner, and his reasoning will be just. *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of private impulse; for prophecy came not of old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.* The apostle meant, that the prophets did not work up their minds into a ferment, or speak things at random, but that what they delivered was the mind of the Spirit of God, who inspired them to say what they did.

Your clergy say justly, that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, and the only infallible interpreter of Scripture here below. The next thing which they advance is, that they are the church. Then comes the inference; to wit, that their interpretation of Scripture is infallible. This is weak reasoning. The church, undoubtedly, is the best qualified of all human societies to interpret the Scriptures, because all its members are born of water and the Spirit, or the word and Spirit of God, and have been taught that which no man can teach his

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neighbour, whatever name they may go by among men, or however they may be despised and persecuted by that false church which is supported by the scarlet-coloured beast. You and I, my dear Eusebia, should have much to fear from that quarter, did we not know that greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world. Fear not, my friend; these sons of Anak, formidable as they may appear, shall be bread for us: for if the Lord do indeed delight in us, because his Son has chosen us for the lot of his inheritance, we may be certain that he will give us that good land, the heavenly Canaan, though it is possible we may enter it through much tribulation, which is comparatively a matter of small importance. I know, Eusebia, that we have both reason to expect that we shall be disowned by our parents; but let us remember that we have a portion to live upon. Our Lord has told us that our heavenly Father knoweth we have need of food and raiment. That knowledge is our security. May he be our support, who clotheth the grass of the field, and feedeth the young ravens; then we shall never want any thing that is for our real advantage.

We shall be glad to hear how long you have entertained your present sentiments, and what method God took to give you divine knowledge. I believe that the poor man you have mentioned, and whom you appear so justly to esteem, is very able to instruct you in the fundamentals of our holy religion. Pray give my kind respects to him and his wife.

I am, my dear Eusebia,

Your sincere friend,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

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LETTER VII.

From Thomas Livingstone to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

MY wife and I received your noble present, for which we bless God, and thank our kind benefactress. It came very seasonably, as we have had the misfortune to lose our cow, and this sum will both buy me another, and a good load of hay; and milk is a great blessing in a poor man's family. My poor wife wept at the death of our cow, and told me we should never have another; and I had reason to fear that that would be the case: but our gracious father has provided for us much beyond either our hopes or deserts. I rejoice, also, because I know that this, my dear friend, is fruit which will abound to your account: it is bread cast upon the waters, which you will find after many days.

That very worthy young lady, Miss Eusebia Neville, read to me the letters which she had received from you and your niece, with which I and my wife were exceedingly delighted. No part of your letter gave us greater pleasure than that, wherein you prove the truth of the facts related in the Old Testament, from the festivals appointed by God to commemorate them. A whole nation would not have agreed to expend their time and property, that they and their children might remember events which never happened. Other divine ordinances convey the same instruction. Without revelation, we cannot account for the origin of circumcision. But we there learn, that there was a twofold design in that institution. It was intended both to keep the Israelites a distinct people, and to typify the circumcision of the hearts of believers.

The death of Christ proves the legal sacrifices to have been of divine origin. Had they not referred to his death,

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they would have had no design visible in them. They prefigured his death, as the prophecies predicted it.

The great atonement for sin was made by the Lamb of God at the time of the passover; and thus the Jews fulfilled their own scriptures. Was it casual that the paschal lamb was eaten, and the Redeemer crucified, on the same day? One would imagine it to be impossible that any person should believe these things to have been accidental. Must we not shut our eyes against the truth if we deny that the often-repeated promise has been fulfilled, that in the seed of Abraham all the families of the earth should be blessed; as well as the numerous prophecies that the Gentiles should partake with the Jews of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, and in a much greater degree? What could induce as wise a man as Moses to relate the offering up of Isaac, if the history were not true? And if it was true, did not God intend thereby to show to Abraham what he had determined to do respecting his own well-beloved Son?—But I ought to remember that I am writing to a person who is able to instruct me. However, she will not despise the weak attempt of the least of the servants of Jesus Christ to establish the truth of the Scriptures; from a total unbelief, or at least a partial belief of which, proceed all the heresies which are in the world.

In my conversation with Miss Neville, I frequently endeavour to confirm her in the belief of the Scriptures; for there it is that the wicked spirit makes his attacks upon her, as he does upon many young converts. She had numerous convictions before her conversion of her being a sinner, and she pacified her conscience by confessing her sins to the priest, by receiving absolution, and by determining to offend no more. "But in reading Fox's Acts and Monuments of the church, I was convinced," said she, "that I was an unbeliever, and that I had trusted in my own righteousness. I now desire, and shall ever desire, to be found in my beloved Lord, not having my own right-

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eousness, which, in my own sight, is so imperfect that I count it but dross; what then must it appear in his eyes who searches the reins and hearts!"

I forbear to enlarge upon this pleasing subject, because she intends to give you an account of the mercy of God in calling her to the knowledge of himself. Poor child! she is dreadfully apprehensive of the consequences of her father's knowing that she has forsaken the religion of her ancestors. He is a man that would be an ornament to any religion. His compassion and liberality know no bounds: nor is his benevolence confined to persons of the Romish religion. He seeks out the abodes of misery, and endeavours to alleviate every distress. In his devotion, I have reason to believe that he is constant and fervent. To his servants he is a parent rather than a master; and though he takes care of his affairs, and sees that his servants are diligent and faithful, he neither rules with rigour, expects any thing unreasonable, nor reproves with bitterness. His commands are so mild, and are mixed with so much politeness, even to the meanest person who works for him, that one would be ready to imagine he was suing for a favour. His children have been admirably educated. He never permitted any bickerings or contentions to arise among them, observing, that they often sow the seeds of a hatred or an indifference which continues through life. He discouraged in them a proud conceit of themselves, and a haughty contempt of their inferiors. He detested idleness, and used every effort to accustom his children to diligence. Idleness, he would tell them, is no more the privilege of the rich than of the poor; it being the parent of poverty and rags to the one, and of ignorance and disease to the other.

I could fill many pages, Madam, with the character of this excellent man, even although I were to confine myself to things which I have seen. And these things are good and valuable as far as they go. Even where they proceed from a self-righteous and self-dependent principle, they are good and profitable to men, and are infinitely to be

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preferred to those vices which have been the curse of mankind. But the true Christian is he who gives a cup of cold water to a friend of Jesus because he belongs to him; and who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, which is a principle of action which unregenerate men are unacquainted with.

Notwithstanding what I have said of Mr. Neville, I cannot add that he appears to be under the guidance of divine revelation. On the contrary, he seems to be entirely under the direction of father Albino and the church of Rome. Christ has taught us to call no man master on earth. We ought, therefore, to follow no one, any further than he appears to us to follow the great Head of the church.

Mr. Neville is truly a worthy man; very inoffensive, humane, and charitable; but blindly attached to the Romish religion. His zeal would be commendable, if it were directed by the word of God. Thousands, who are zealous, think they cannot fail to be accepted by their Maker. They suppose that all which is required of them is to do what they imagine to be right. It is true that, where divine revelation has never appeared, the light of reason is the only guide; but in countries where the Scriptures are known, every person is in a state of condemnation who does not implicitly and habitually submit to them in the general tenour of his conduct. This submission is the Shibboleth which distinguishes Christians from unbelievers.

I believe that Miss Eusebia Neville is as much afraid on account of the priest as on account of her father. The old gentleman has spared no pains in her education, and has a parental affection for her. She fears, therefore, that her leaving the pale of the church will be a shock too great for him to bear.

I have almost filled my paper, and must therefore conclude with congratulating you, Madam, on the wonderful deliverance which God has wrought for our young friend.

I have had some difficulty to convince her that the Ro-

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mish church is the Antichristian society spoken of in the Revelation; not because she did not perceive a great number of errors in it, but because she thought other churches to be as bad. I believe Miss Barnwell has taken an effectual method to remove every remaining doubt, by showing my friend that religious establishments are in their own nature Antichristian. Pray give my kind love to that young lady, and accept my most sincere thanks for the favour conferred upon, dear Madam,

Your grateful, most obedient,
And very humble servant,
THOMAS LIVINGSTONE.

LETTER VIII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I RECEIVED your kind letter, together with that of my dear friend Miss Barnwell, and I thank you both for them. I have the happiness to agree with you, as does also my friend Thomas Livingstone, as you will perceive by his letter, which at his desire I have transcribed for your inspection. I have not altered the language much; the ideas not at all.

I need not tell you, Madam, that Thomas possesses a good natural understanding, which he had an opportunity of improving in his youth, by reading a variety of authors. He was the servant of an elderly gentleman, who employed him several hours in a day in reading to him, and who had so fine an ear, that he knew if at any time he did not understand his author, and made him repeat the passage till he did. After his master's death, Thomas married the housekeeper, and they took a little farm of thirty pounds a year. Having five children, who are all either married or at ser-

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vice, it required great industry to preserve their little pittance. But the worst misfortune he ever met with was the inclosing of the fields of the parish where he lived. Two gentlemen undertook to rent the whole, in consequence of which he and eight more were thrown out of their business, six of whom embarked with their families for Pennsylvania, where he has heard they live exceedingly well. He would have gone too, if he had had money enough to pay for his family's passage. Not being able to procure a little farm, and hearing that there was a small cottage to be sold in this village, (which is the place of his nativity,) he laid out the little money which was left after his debts were paid, in the purchase of it, and has for these ten years past worked as a labourer for my father and others. He tells me he has no reason to find fault with his condition, since God has hitherto given him health and strength, house and home, food and raiment; "and above all," said he, "the knowledge of himself, which is "every mercy in one: for if God be our God, we shall not "want any good thing."

My dear Miss Barnwell desires me to give an account of the manner in which my heavenly Father was pleased to bring me out of that state of ignorance and unbelief, in which I am convinced all mankind are born, and would also live and die, if not prevented by sovereign grace. I will endeavour to satisfy her. But let me in the first place acknowledge, that she has proved to my satisfaction that Christ's church never has been, nor can be national; and that now I no more wonder that the church of Rome has the marks and characters of the antichristian church, than I wonder at the degeneracy of human nature since the fall.

I told Thomas last night, that I thought the church of England has as few real Christians in it as the church of Rome.

We have very little reason, said he, to expect the contrary. The church of England, as well as the church of Rome, is composed in general of nominal Christians. These will always be enemies to real Christianity, as we

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have been before them. But the church of England in this respect is greatly preferable to the church of Rome. Through the kind providence of God, the civil power has chained her down in such a manner, that she can do but little hurt to the servants of Jesus Christ.

Be it so, Thomas, said I; yet if, according to my friend's letter, all national churches are antichristian, how can we account for God's permitting such men as Mr. Hervey and Mr. Romaine (of whom I have heard you speak well) to continue in the church of England?

The arguments, replied he, which they use to justify their continuance in it, will not bear examination. Christians cannot continue in Babylon the less, any more than in Babylon the great, without partaking of her sins. But the call to the people of God to come out of Babylon, implies that some of them will be found in her, even at the time of her overthrow. And notwithstanding they err in their conduct and reasonings, it is not to be doubted that the providence of God turns it to a good account, by bringing many persons in the church of England to the knowledge of the truth through their instrumentality.

In giving my friends a short history of my life, I must begin with informing them, that from my being seven or eight years of age, I was sincere and zealous in the religion wherein I was educated; and that whenever I compared the professors of it with Protestants, those who had departed from the only true church (as I termed it) sank very low in my esteem.

The first time I was fully and feelingly convinced that there is a God who rules the world in righteousness, and that I was the object of his providential regard, my conviction was owing to the following incident. I was so good a horse-woman, that at seven or eight years of age my father durst trust me to ride my poney any where by myself. When I was about that age, being to visit the Miss Harcourts, who you know live seven miles from Thornton, in the pride of my heart I begged permission to go by myself. The next day, as I was coming back, my

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poney stumbled on the gallop, and threw me over its head. I was not hurt by the fall: the great misfortune was, the running away of my horse. I ran after him a full hour; but I might as well have attempted to catch a deer.—— Looking every way, and seeing no one, I tried again, but without success. At last, night approaching, I fell on my knees in an agony of distress, and besought the Father of mercies to have compassion on me. I then arose and went to my horse, which, to my great astonishment, did not start away as before, but stood as still as if he had been fastened to the ground.

This wonderful interposition of Providence made a great impression upon me. I was, however, as ignorant of God's method of saving sinners for the sake of the Redeemer, as if I had been a Mahometan: and I look upon this to be the common case of mankind in a state of nature. The Holy Spirit well represents such persons as blind, notwithstanding they have eyes: and deaf, notwithstanding they have ears. I remember, when I was afterwards confirmed by a Romish bishop, I expected it would confer a great deal of holiness upon me; for I was very desirous of doing something that would recommend me to the divine favour.

The first time I suspected the excellence of the church of Rome was about two years past. My dear Miranda knows widow Privet, who keeps a grocer's shop in our parish. I accidentally saw upon her counter the remains of a large folio, which she was using in wrapping up goods. Upon examination, I found it to be part of the third volume of Fox's Acts and Monuments. Having opened it where the examinations and the martyrdom of Mr. John Philpot are recorded, I was amazed at the scurrilous language used by bishop Bonner to the good man, and at the more than inhuman treatment which he received at the hands of that bloody prelate, as I then in my own mind termed him. I took the book into her parlour, and read the account of his examination, sufferings, and death; after which, you little think, my dear friends, what a state

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my mind was in. It occurred to my memory, that the apostles *departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name*; and I recollected these words of Paul, *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Falling upon my knees, I said, I beseech thee, O my God, that I may have the spirit and temper of thy dear Son, and that I may never have the spirit of those wolves in sheep's clothing. This good man appeared to be so dead to the world, and to have such a fervent love to God and to his people, and to be so patient and undaunted under his great sufferings in the bishop's coal-hole and other prisons, that my soul was united to him. I gave vent to my grief by shedding floods of tears, and implored my merciful Father, for the sake of his dear Son, to direct me in the way that I should go; for I became very jealous of a church which had so defiled itself with blood. I could not help observing, that this persecuting spirit was very different from that of our Lord; who did good to all; who prayed for his murderers; and who commanded his followers to bless them that cursed them, to do good to them that hated them, and to pray for them who despitefully used and persecuted them. The arguments likewise used by Mr. Philpot against transubstantiation, gave such rude shocks to the sentiments in which I had been educated, that I was amazed at the folly and wickedness of his persecutors, who seemed to think it possible to alter a person's sentiments by cruel treatment. They might, said I to myself, have made this good man a hypocrite, if it had been in their power by violence to make him yield to their will; but when they had so far succeeded, they could have gone no further.

I went out of the parlour to Mrs. Privet, and offered to buy the part of the volume which was left. But she would have nothing for it, telling me that my father had given her that, with several other books, some time past, for shop-paper.

I cannot but admire the providence of God. My dear parent, I have no doubt, gave this book to Mrs. Privet, on

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purpose that we should not come to the sight of it; and the very method he took to prevent my seeing it, was the cause of its falling in my way.

I concealed it in a lumber garret, where I have wept many an hour in reading it; after which I used to be much dissatisfied with the church of Rome, until, looking round among my protestant acquaintance, and seeing no appearance of religion, I concluded that every thing was imperfect here below, and that the church of Rome, with all her faults, of which I had discovered no small number, was the only church in which there were any remains of Christianity. And I now think, that there is much more zeal among those of our communion, (if I may yet call it ours,) than among protestants in general; witness the number of both sexes who embrace the monastic life, and seclude themselves from the world, together with the anchorites, who in every age of the church have left society, that they might give themselves up to fasting and prayer. When my friends are kind enough to favour me with a letter, I beg they will give me their thoughts of the hermitical and monastic lives.

I know my father, the moment he understands that I have embraced what he will call heretical opinions, will either turn me out of doors, or insist upon my taking the veil: and it cannot be a great while before he knows it; for I have determined, with the divine assistance, never more to attend at mass, which I am convinced is an idolatrous worship. You will easily believe, my dear friends, that mine would be a very disagreeable situation, were not my God to support me under the prospect of those evils which seem ready to overwhelm me. I ask no more than literally bread to eat, and raiment to put on; and how coarse they are, I trust will give me no concern. My hope is, that my heavenly Father, who feeds the ravens, and clothes the grass of the field, will not suffer me to want these absolutely necessary things.

I have just received a letter from St. Omer's, from my dear brother, wherein he tells us, that he meets with so

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many unmeaning professions of friendship, so much insincerity, and so little real religion, that he is weary of the haunts of men, and frequently wishes that he lived in some desert, where he had no one to converse with but the Creator of all things. He desires his kind respects to several of his friends by name, among whom is Miss Barnwell. I wish my brother had just such a wife, and that through her instrumentality he might be brought to the knowledge of that salvation which is by Jesus Christ. To him, the great Shepherd of the sheep, I commend both my friends, and am, dear Madam,

Your affectionate friend,
And very humble servant,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER IX.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WE received your letter, and that of our friend Thomas. I am happy to find that I agree so exactly with that worthy man.

I recommend it to you, above all other things, to be very conversant with the Scriptures; since they are mines which can never be exhausted, wells of salvation, which will never fail, and breasts of everlasting consolation. Nothing gives me a meaner opinion of any one's Christianity, except an irreligious life, than his running from place to place after this or that preacher, while his Bible is neglected.

I once asked a friend of mine what he thought to be the best mark of regeneration?

I believe, Madam, replied he, I may venture to assert, that a love to the things revealed in the New Testament,

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is the first and best of all marks; because we thereby show that we love him who revealed them.

And pray, Sir, said I, what mark do you think to be next in point of importance?

I must answer, said he, as our Lord did in another case, The second is like unto it, to wit, a love to the Old Testament. Wherever these two marks are conspicuous, there is no great necessity to look for a third; inasmuch as he who sincerely loves the word of God cannot run into very great errors either in doctrine or practice. If he at any time should fall into a mistake, either through the temptations of Satan, or the wily arts of those who lie in wait to deceive, he will resemble a good clock, whose pendulum has been shaken by some rude touch, the improper motion of which continues no longer than until it has recovered its natural vibration. God has frequently left the most acute and learned of his servants to err, even in comparatively easy and obvious things, that he may thereby honour his word, and teach us not to glory in men, the very best of whom, especially if they write much, have wood, hay, and stubble, in their productions, as well as gold and precious stones.

The use I would wish my friend to make of the great mercy shown to her is, to reflect on the power and goodness of her heavenly Father. This reflection will tend to support her under the prospect of future trials. Her case is truly alarming, when we look no further than to an incensed parent; but if we take off our eyes from these sensible objects, and view the great I AM, who holdeth the waters in the hollow of his hand, we shall have reason to exclaim, Alas, what are our small affairs! How little can the powers of earth or hell obstruct the designs of that Being who doeth whatsoever he will! The ravens cry to him, and their wants are not beneath his notice: but the names of his children he engraves upon his breast, and he keeps them as the apple of his eye. If therefore he is for us, who can be against us? Moreover, my dear child, you ought to pray and hope, that God in his great mercy will

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give you your friends, as it were, from the dead. When the Lord delivered Paul from a terrible shipwreck, he also gave him those who sailed with him: and I have known several instances (besides those recorded in the Scriptures) where salvation has come to an individual, of its also coming to the whole house: so that there has been a general jubilee—a deliverance from the worst of all bondage, the servitude of Satan.

I rejoice, Miss Neville, that you perceive the idolatry of the mass. That is abundantly manifested in almost every leaf of the third volume of Fox's Acts and Monuments. We there see many servants of Jesus choosing to lose their lives by the most terrible of all deaths, rather than submit to an idolatry as gross and stupid as that of the Egyptians, who adored leeks and onions. The method taken by those idolatrous bishops and priests to propagate their superstition, sufficiently demonstrates its impiety. They called the mass an unbloody sacrifice; with what propriety, I leave those persons to judge, who know how many thousands have been murdered by those bloody prelates, because they would not fall down and worship the idol, made of flour and water, which they had set up. That idolatrous error, as well as almost every other, was invented by Satan, to supersede the atonement made by the Lamb of God, when he bowed his head and cried, It is finished. I am thankful that the providence of God directed you to the sight of that valuable book, where the fruits are discovered which have been borne by the partizans of the church of Rome. At the time when it was published, the servants of God seemed to apprehend, that a national church of Christ was not in the nature of things impossible. The Reformers, therefore, compiled the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, to exclude all such from being teachers as were destitute of the truth and spirit of Christ; but with how little effect time has demonstrated: since in the church of England, as well as the church of Rome, and all other national churches, young men are educated for the ministry at public seminaries, not because their parents perceive

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them to be influenced by a love to the souls of men, or apt to teach, but because they hope they have influence enough to get them preferred in the church. Or if they have no such hope, yet the vanity of some parents is sufficiently gratified, if they can see their child in a gown and cassoc, and styled the Reverend; although it would have been much better both for the youth and the community, if he had been brought up to a calling, wherein he might have been a useful member of society.

I have been frequently surprised at the simplicity of our Reformers. However abstracted they were from the world, they could not but have observed, that in contentions for gain the wicked will always be uppermost. If, therefore, they would have a national church, they should have abolished tithes, and every other ecclesiastical emolument; and if any one had desired to be a parish minister, he ought to have been elected by the majority of the people. I do not say that a good national church could have been procured by these means. The majority of the inhabitants of a parish are nominal Christians; and such would never, from an approbation of his sentiments, choose a minister of the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, so long as that gospel continues to be offensive and foolish in the eyes of unregenerate men. If, therefore, there were no other argument to be used against the church of Rome, than her being a national church, that would suffice to show that she is not a church of Christ. But alas! she is the mother of harlots and abominations, and is become, (as it was foretold of her,) the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

You ask me, my dear friend, what I think of those monks, nuns, and anchorites, who have retired from the world, that they might give themselves up to fasting and prayer. I answer, They make great pretences to holiness, but I fear with very little reason, if a love to God and to his revealed will be the rule by which we are to measure the holiness of ourselves and others. Vows of celibacy in either sex are contrary to natural religion, as well as to the

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injunction given by God to our first parents. Forbidding to marry is one of the marks of antichrist, or the grand apostacy from Christianity.

With respect to hermits, I need only say, that man was formed a social being; and that, as we were not made merely for ourselves, but for the good of each other, we ought to abide in the calling where God in his providence has placed us. Every Christian soldier has a warfare appointed him by his general; and it is unlawful for him to desert his post, and to leave society, where he is obliged to endeavour to be useful. Besides, may not our God justly say to all who abandon society, be their intentions what they may, Who hath required this at your hands?

Since I wrote the above my brother-in-law, Mr. Barnwell, is arrived from Jamaica, after an absence of eight months, to the great joy of his daughter. But I doubt, poor dear girl, she is going to encounter many troubles, which in one form or other await all the servants of Jesus Christ. She joins me in the best wishes for the happiness of all our friends at Thornton. Pray be kind enough to continue your narrative, which I doubt not will edify as well as oblige,

My dear young friend,
Yours very sincerely,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER X.

From Miss Barnwell to Miss Eusebia Neville:

MY DEAR EUSEBIA,

MY aunt has acquainted you that my father is returned from Jamaica. I was exceedingly glad to see him; but I fear I shall never more enjoy an hour's comfort in his company. How do I wish he were like our excellent friend Thomas Livingstone!

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I believe my father was glad to see me: but when we conversed together, and I appeared destitute of that flightiness which I formerly possessed, he said he could not think what was the matter with me.

Pray, cried he, whither do you go, to church or meeting?

I answered, that I had been at both, but that I chiefly went to meeting with my aunt.

To meeting with your aunt? replied he contemptuously. I assure you, Miranda, those who leave the church, and preach in conventicles, are all of them villains, who make it their study to turn people's heads. I am sorry you have so little of your father in you as to go and hear them. I never was in one of their places in my life. Your aunt indeed married one of this sort of people; a very honest man, I must confess, so that I did not so much wonder at her going to the meeting: but as Mr. Worthington is dead, and the reason of her leaving the church no longer exists, I am amazed that she, who is a sensible woman in other respects, should continue to have any thing to do with such people.

I believe, Sir, said I, Mr. Worthington did not desire her to leave the church, but left it wholly to her own option. I have heard her say that, at first, she only went now and then occasionally, until it pleased God to open her eyes.

O Eusebia, my poor parent burst here into a loud laugh, turning my expression of God's opening her eyes into ridicule. Alas, how sad a thing is it to be ignorant, both of our misery and the remedy! He perceived, by my tears, that his laughter was no pleasing thing to me, and cried out, Fy, fy, Miranda, I did not think such an enthusiastical expression, would have come from your mouth. My child, all canting and whining about religion is a mere farce. If we do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, that is all, that is all; God requires no more.

"'Bout modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
"His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

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And yet, Sir, replied I, the church of Rome, to which Mr. Pope, the author of those lines, was the greatest bigot, has murdered her millions on account of their faith. This, I think bears a pretty near resemblance to fighting. And there is another church, Sir, that has shown herself to be her true daughter, by treading in the same steps as long as she could. The liberty which dissenters enjoy at this day they have no cause to thank the clergy for.

Faith, girl, said my father, your answer is more to the purpose than I could have expected. I believe, indeed, that priests of all religions are the same. All I say is this: every one ought to go where he was brought up. In London, I acknowledge, some genteel people go to the meeting; so that I do not so much blame you for going with your aunt; but in the country, Miranda, none go to meeting but beggars, the very lowest of the people, except in our great towns, where a few tradesmen are of that persuasion; but even there you scarcely ever see any genteel people among them. Mr. Pink, indeed, and his family, went to meeting when they lived in a market-town; but since he came to reside upon his estate, he has always gone to church. I asked Miss Pink one day the reason her father and mother did not go to meeting now. Because, replied she, none but beggars go to meeting here. And a very good reason, I think; as it would be out of character for Mr. Pink to associate with such low people, in a place not much better than a barn, and to hear a despicable mechanic.

O Eusebia, I could formerly have heard such discourse with pleasure: but now I was filled with the most poignant grief. In answer to my father, I begged him to give me his thoughts on this passage in the word of God: *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God*

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chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.

Of what use is it to quote Scripture, cried my father; Scripture may be quoted for any thing.

After this private conversation, my father said to my aunt, when we were at tea, I hope, Madam, you will be so obliging as to accompany my daughter and me to the play. The tragedy of Macbeth will be acted at Drury-lane. I admire Shakspeare; he was the most original genius in the world; and in his fairies and witches he never had, and probably never will have an equal.

I am willing, Sir, replied my aunt, that he should have all the honour which accrues from excelling in the invention of such sinful amusements.

I tell you what, Madam, said my father, I would rather go to see a play written by that immortal bard, than to hear the best sermon that ever was preached, and there would be more to be learned by it. But the question is, will you oblige me and go with us?

Indeed I will not, replied she; nor will I consent that my niece shall go while she is under my care. When she is in the country she may do as she pleases.

Nay, Madam, answered my father, when she is in the country, she shall do as I please. I am afraid, sister, you have filled her head so full of religion, that it will be the cause of many a quarrel between us; for I shall insist upon her being as she used to be.

I assure you, brother, replied my aunt, it will be in vain to expect it. Your daughter was a thoughtless creature, and lived without the fear of God. Now she has learned to fear him, who, after he has killed, is able to cast into hell: and I dare say she would rather suffer the greatest evil than go to a playhouse, or do any thing deliberately to offend God.

So then, Madam, cried my father, raising his voice, (I perceived he was angry,) you have taught her, I observe, to set me at defiance; but we shall see when she is at home who will be the greatest coward, she or I. My

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daughter knew that I abhorred pretenders to religion, as I hate toads or vipers; and yet she must become one of those whining hypocrites. I must say I hate them, and shall for ever hate them.

I was bathed in tears, as I well might, at a conversation so truly alarming: but, wiping my eyes and falling upon my knees, I implored my dear parent not to desire me to offend my Creator. In every matter wherein I could conscientiously oblige him, I promised to be obedient without reserve.

Well, Miranda, cried my father, angrily, you may either go or stay: I shall ask you no more.

My aunt replied, that she was certain I would gladly do all, or even more than he could desire, where I could do so without breaking the divine commands.

At this my father laughed, and desired to know which of the commandments was broken by going to a play?

The whole of the moral law, replied she, is comprised in love to the Author of our being, and in love to our neighbour. But it cannot be said of those who delight in such vanities that their conversation is in heaven, or that they have any knowledge of, or true love to God. And if by our example we countenance our neighbour in sin, it cannot be said that we have any true love to him. So that to frequent those indecent assemblies ——

Come, come, sister, interrupted my father, a sermon once a week is more than sufficient, except it be a very short one indeed. I have no doubt but as honest men as any in the kingdom frequent the theatre constantly; and if I fare as well as they, I dare say I shall not be very badly off.

As soon as my father had said this, he ordered his man to call a coach, and went away without asking me to accompany him. But he has since been very cross when he has been here, which has not been often; for he has a suit depending in chancery, so that a good deal of his time has been taken up with his attorney and counsel.

We shall be in the country in a few days, with the di-

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vine permission, when I hope to have the pleasure of seeing my dear friend. But I fear that if bonds and imprisonments do not await me, as they frequently have done the servants of Jesus Christ, I shall suffer a great deal from my dear parent, who only does as I should now have done, if the mercy of God had not prevented.

Pray remember our love to Thomas and his wife. My aunt desires you will correspond with her after I am gone, and also continue your narrative. She was so kind as to intreat my father to let me stay; to which he only answered, In my humble opinion, sister, she has been here too long already, except she had studied the fifth commandment as well as the rest. My dear Eusebia,

I am your most affectionate friend,
And companion in affliction,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XI.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR niece's account of what she has suffered, and of what she is likely to suffer, from her parent, has made me low-spirited, as I fear it is only a prelude to my own trials. I expect my father and sister, and father Albino, will be at home next week, at which time I intend to visit my dear Miranda, if I hear that she is arrived at Barnwell. I expect no more comfort at the Abbey, since I dare not any longer conform to that idolatrous worship wherein I was educated.

It is your desire, Madam, that I should continue my narrative. This I will gladly do, or any thing else wherein I can oblige Mrs. Worthington

I have already related how much I was affected with reading the examinations and martyrdom of Mr. Philpot

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and many others. Yet, although impressed with unfavourable sentiments concerning the church of Rome, I consoled myself with the reflection, that the same murderous principle was imbibed by those who had separated from us. It sometimes amazes me, that so excellent a person as Calvin should consent to the burning of Servetus; not to mention other similar tragedies performed in England the moment the Reformers got the power into their own hands. At first view it seems as if the contest between them and the catholics was, which of the two parties had the greatest right to persecute. But I am now persuaded, that wherever the civil magistrate is excited by the adversary of mankind to favour one sect or denomination of Christians above the rest, and to bestow the wealth of the people upon it, Satan will always enter with that sop, and the betraying of Christ and his cause, and the murder of his faithful servants, will inevitably follow.

About this time last year my father and sister and I were at a friend's house in London, upon a visit, where we stayed a month, the longest month I ever saw. One day my sister and I crossed Smithfield, to go through the Cloisters in our way to Cheapside. I looked around me, and though I did all in my power to suppress my emotion, could not avoid shedding tears at the remembrance of the many servants of Christ who had sealed the truth in that place with their blood. My sister asked me what was the matter. When I was able to speak, I told her truly that I was grieved at the heart to see a place where so many protestants had been put to death, to the reproach and scandal of our religion.

Indeed, said my sister, I am not sorry about it. I have often heard my father say it was their own fault. If they would have renounced their heresy, even at the stake, their lives would have been spared.

Ah, Maria, cried I, how would you think a protestant reasoned, if you were fastened to a stake for being a catholic, and he were to tell you, that if you were burned it would be your own fault, since if you would renounce your heresy, even at the stake, you might live?

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The case, replied she, is not parallel; is there no difference between catholics and heretics?

Too little, answered I, between catholics and some protestants; for catholics and protestants have murdered each other on a religious account, which was imitating lions and tigers more than the meek and lowly Jesus, who went about doing good, and came to save men's lives, and not to destroy them.

You may say what you please, interrupted my sister angrily; but in my opinion, we ought no more to pity heretics, than snakes or vermin, which were made to be destroyed.—I made no reply, as I perceived that my sister and I saw things in a very different light, not only in this, but in almost every thing besides.

We had a good deal of altercation while we were in London about dress; my sister being fond of making a gay appearance, and I choosing to dress very plain. She wore a high head-dress, in the very top of the fashion; and she could not persuade me, either with good words or chiding, to dress any otherwise than I had been used to do; for I always abhorred the fickle, fantastic extremes in the dresses of our sex, and my father was of my mind. My sister was very angry. She thought it decent, she said, to follow the fashion, however ridiculous it might seem, because custom gave a sanction to every thing; adding, that there was as much pride in aiming to appear singular, as in dressing like other people. However specious this reasoning might be, I could not think of spending half my time under the hands of a hair-dresser, that I might have twelve inches added to my stature. I therefore was sufficiently unfashionable, and was, by many persons, despised as a plain country-girl; which made Maria peevishly tell me, that a fine face and shape were thrown away upon me; and that people did not deserve such things who did not know how to make use of them. Or rather, cried she, you are a little too conscious of your own perfections, and look down with contempt on the aid you might receive from dress.—I generally made no answer to compliments

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of this kind, since all the wrangling in the world would not have changed our sentiments. I was glad when I had returned into the country. To those who can take pleasure in masquerades, routs, and assemblies, together with theatrical entertainments and other public amusements, I will thankfully resign my share of them. I would much rather converse with trees and flowers, or the brute creation, than with mankind. The fulsome flattery and artful designs of some; the self-sufficiency, the haughty looks, and the sneering pride of others; and the poor, vain pursuits of almost all; have given me an unfavourable opinion of human nature. O my dear friends, if I had lived in London a hundred years, and had spent them in the manner we did that one month, the whole time would not have yielded me half the pleasure I experienced in one quarter of an hour about a month after our return.

It was about noon, when, as I was walking in the wilderness, meditating upon divine subjects, and praying to be guided in the way that I should go, I at length came to one of those seats which are cut in the hedge that is next the closes, and sat down. Hearing somebody cough just by me, and looking through a small aperture, I beheld Thomas Livingstone, who had been scouring the ditch, on the other side of the hedge. I knew him, but had never spoken to him in my life. Having prepared to dine, by laying on the bank a piece of barley bread, a bit of cheese, a little salt in a paper, and an onion, which things he had taken out of a basket, he lifted up his hands before he began his frugal repast, and said, I thank thee, O my God, for the food which thou hast provided for the nourishment of this frail body; but above all I bless thee for Jesus Christ, and that hope of eternal life which thou hast given me through him!

How was I surprised and delighted! I ran a little further, and falling on my knees, thanked God that I had found a Christian. This short thanksgiving had no resemblance to a string of prayers, hurried over, and repeated

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by number. I earnestly desired a more intimate acquaintance with this poor, rich man.

Ye sons and daughters of riot and dissipation! if ye delight in power, affluence, and grandeur, behold in this hedger and ditcher, an angel in disguise; one, as much superior to thousands whom an undiscerning world dignifies with the titles of august and mighty, as these earthly gods are to the insect they crush beneath their feet. Alas! how will they bear the dreadful change that in one year, or day, or hour, may take place, when such as he shall be comforted in the presence of the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, and made companions of, and placed upon a level with myriads of angels, while they shall open their eyes in the regions of despair! They think to quench the flames of hell by disbelieving their reality; nor will they be convinced of their error till they have full and feeling evidence. Well! they must wait a very little while, and every scruple will be removed, and no place left for doubt.

The apparent happiness of this poor man, blessing God for his barley bread, and possessing a hope of salvation by the Redeemer, inspired me with a multitude of these reflections; and when I contrasted with it the superb, magnificent, and gay things I had seen in London, they shrank into nothing. Hitherto I had supposed that the protestants of the present day were a different kind of people from those who laid down their lives in Smithfield: but I now saw that I had not been acquainted with protestants of the right kind, and that true Christians are hidden from the world; and those words of John occurred to my mind, *The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*

I determined to go and see this good man, whose wife I knew, as she frequently assists our cook when we have more company than usual. But I had a terrible inward struggle; I feared that if I put myself in the way of temptation, I might become what my friends term a heretic. On the other hand, I considered that I was nineteen years of age, and able to discern between good and evil; and that it was my duty to try all things, and hold fast that which is

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good. I also thought that if I should perish, it would be an aggravation to my guilt that God had pointed out the means whereby I might understand his will, and that I had neglected them.

I went to our friend's house; but like Nicodemus I stayed till night. The good man was at prayer. I shall never forget with what fervour he addressed the Majesty of heaven and earth: my heart burnt within me. How unlike, said I to myself, is this to saying prayers in an unknown tongue, or to running them over as a school-boy repeats his task. This man prays as if he was petitioning for his life at the bar of his judge!

When he had finished I went in. The good people were surprised to see me, especially at that time of night. My father had taught us never to make an excuse. My children, he would say, whenever it is improper to tell the undisguised truth, it becomes you not to speak at all. I therefore told my friend without reserve how long I had been uneasy in my mind in consequence of reading Fox's History of the Martyrs, and also that I had heard him address the Divine Being before he began his meal; and I concluded with observing, that to be delivered from the wrath to come was a matter of such infinite importance, that I thought it became every person to use his utmost endeavour not to be mistaken.

While I was speaking, I perceived Mary, my friend's wife, in tears; and even Thomas was so moved, that a drop now and then started from his eye, and trickled down his cheek. How beautiful is that trait in the character of Christians which is recommended by the apostle, that they *look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*

After a little pause he said, my dear young lady, both you and your family, from whom I have received much friendship, have many times been the subjects of my earnest prayers, and I trust that God has heard my request; but it is necessary before we build to sit down and count the cost. I know your father too well to suppose that he

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will suffer you to become a protestant without manifesting the utmost indignation.

I know it, Thomas, replied I; but nothing which I can suffer bears any proportion to lifting up my eyes in hell. However, I do not see the necessity of my becoming a protestant: If I only leave the church of Rome in those things in which she has corrupted herself, will not that be sufficient?

Without doubt, Miss, replied he; and I would wish you to follow my advice. Read the New Testament with care and attention, and as much as possible without prejudice; and accompany the reading of that divine book with supplication to him whose word it is, that he will open your understanding, and incline your will to receive his truth, whatever may be the consequence: and if you find the Roman Catholic religion taught there, embrace it; if not, leave that church, so far as she has left divine revelation.

Thomas, replied I, the advice you have given me is so excellent, that an angel could not prejudice me against it. Yes, my dear friend, I will endeavour, with the divine assistance, to learn what I am to believe, and what I am to practise, entirely from the word of God; and if I perish, I perish.

This is not the language, my dear young lady, said he, of one who is likely to perish; for in proportion as any person loves God's word, and is disposed to be guided by it, he loves also its Author. Every person, on the contrary, who wrests the Scripture from its obvious meaning, so far shows his dislike to God: for the Scripture is his mind revealed to us; and if we dislike his mind, we dislike him.

Since this, I have had three or four conversations with Thomas. We have both been reading archbishop Leighton, and we agree that he was a star of the first magnitude. The writings of this excellent man are a comment upon the observation of Paul, that *if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*. The truths which he has de-

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livered are so weighty and important, and his manner is so modest and affectionate, that before I had finished one page I had a sensation which I cannot describe. I blessed God for having sent such labourers into his vineyard. Yet he does not appear, at least while he retained his archbishopric, to have understood the nature of Christ's kingdom. I am more and more convinced, that if the magistrate were to convert the best religion in a country into the state religion, and to allow salaries to its teachers, it would soon degenerate. Church emoluments will always be considered as a provision for the younger branches of the families of the great; and if these needy persons do not engross all the livings in the gift of the state, or of their families, the remainder will in general be obtained, as my dear Miranda observes, by those bold pushing men, who in contentions for gain are always uppermost. That there are many ministers in the church of England who have the Spirit of Christ, cannot be doubted; and I believe the church of Rome is not destitute of pastors of this description. But national Christianity seems to carry in it the principles of corruption.

I beg you will remember my love to my suffering friend, if she continue with you. I pray that she may not think it a strange thing to be despised by her parent for Christ's sake. Dear Madam, I am most respectfully,

Your sincere friend,

And humble servant,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your letter the day after my niece had left me. She returned home with a heart full of grief both

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on her own account and mine. Every day gives a Christian fresh proof that this is not his rest, but that he must prepare himself to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

You have, perhaps, heard of Mr. M. a very reputable merchant, and an intimate acquaintance of my dear husband. He is become a bankrupt: unhappily for me, he had at least half my fortune in his hands.

It was a great shock to me at first; but the pleasing thought, that my chief treasure is laid up in Heaven, has removed my distress. Besides, a great house, rich furniture, many servants, and an expensive table, are ingredients not absolutely necessary to the comfort of a Christian. I cannot do without food and raiment; and them I have the best security for.

My dear Mr. Worthington was always determined to live below his income, however small. This made us comparatively rich, while several of our acquaintance, who, to all appearance, had a much better trade than we, came to poverty. I have troubled myself chiefly upon my dear niece's account, as her father behaves very unkindly to her, and as I had thought that my fortune would maintain her and me both. But our Redeemer has cautioned us against being anxiously solicitous about what we shall eat, or what we shall drink; and when we survey the multitude of different creatures that God has brought into being, which have their different wants, and which, as the psalmist observes, *all wait upon God, that he may give them their meat in due season*, it will appear unreasonable for his own children to suppose, that them only, of all his creatures, he either cannot or will not provide for.

It was a most kind providence which brought you to be acquainted with our friend Thomas, who is able to teach you all that a Christian needs wish to know. As our heavenly Father intended the religion of the Redeemer for men of all ranks in life, but chiefly the poor, and for those of weak as well as of strong intellects, he has taken care that those things which are necessary to be known should

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not be difficult to be learned, where there is a willing mind: and I believe the instances are rare, where the obvious meaning of Scripture is not the true meaning. I said this once to a learned friend of mine, and he was unwilling to agree to it. The most obvious meaning, said he, of our Lord's words, *Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you*, is that which the Catholics affix to it; yet that is not the true meaning. No, Sir, replied I; neither is it the obvious meaning. The Apostles were accustomed to hear our Lord speak in metaphorical language, which is used in all nations. When, therefore, he called himself a vine, and his disciples the branches, and spake of himself as being a door, and a shepherd, the dullest of his followers, in the darkest age of the church, never misunderstood his meaning. And when he said, *This is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me*, his meaning would have been equally obvious, if the wise men of this world had not darkened it by their comments; for our Lord, in calling himself the living bread which came down from Heaven, alluded to the manna with which the Israelites were fed in the wilderness, and which was undoubtedly a type of the Messiah. Well, Madam, cried he, suppose I give up this passage, you must acknowledge that when our Lord says, *My Father is greater than I*, the most obvious meaning is that held by the Arians, to wit, that our Lord was inferior to the Father. This inferiority, Sir, replied I, referred not to his nature, but to his state of humiliation upon earth compared with his heavenly glory, as appears by the connexion: *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I.*

I sometimes dread the arrival of your friends; but when I consider that every new event is a link of that providence by which the universe has always been, and will be for

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ever governed, my fears are calmed, and I am enabled to say, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

I am, with the sincerest affection,
My dear Miss Neville,
Your friend and servant,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XIII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I RECEIVED your kind favour, and am very sorry to hear you have had so great a loss.

My father and sister, and father Albino, arrived from Bath three days ago, which is a week sooner than I expected them. My father told me yesterday, as we sat by ourselves in the parlour, that he wished I had gone with them, as he could not be happy without me. The letters, said he, you sent while I was at Bath, were scarcely any thing but answers to what I asked you: there was neither life nor spirit in them. Tell me, my dear love, what is the matter; for before I went, I narrowly watched you when you little thought of it, and every now and then saw a tear stealing down your cheek: indeed, my Eusebia, that is not the index of a mind at ease. I apprehend you have received some impression which your modesty will not suffer you to mention. Take care that your affections do not stray beyond your judgment.

You may depend upon it, my dear father, said I, that I shall never enter into any engagement of that kind without your knowledge: I should think myself culpable if I made any advances towards it even in thought.

I could expect no less from your prudence, my father was pleased to say; but I have known many that in other

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respects have passed for wise people, who, in the comedy of love, have acted the silliest parts.

Sir, replied I, nothing of that kind, I assure you, has at present affected me: at the same time I must confess, that my mind has been many times much agitated. I consider that in a few years at most I must leave this world, and appear before the bar of Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and who trieth the reins and the heart. He will ask me what I have to plead why judgment should not pass against me. Pray, my dear father, what can I say; or what could you answer in the same case? for your case it must be as well as mine.

My dear Eusebia, cried my father, it is wrong to give way to such melancholy thoughts: you have always been very good, my child; and if such a one as you is not saved, I may justly say, Wo be to thousands! You have every thing to hope, and nothing to fear. You were washed from your original sin, and regenerated, at the laver of baptism; and you, in evil times, have been nurtured and brought up in the bosom of the church; and Christ has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church. Now a promise which is made to the whole, must also be made to every member: therefore we have reason to believe, that even the worst who have died in the bosom of the church, although they have not made atonement for their crimes by true repentance, will be delivered in due time from the fires of purgatory, through the intercession of good angels and the prayers of the faithful. O my child, how many promises are made to the church of God, from the benefit of which those persons exclude themselves who leave the society of the faithful! No promise is made to sectaries and schismatics: on the contrary, they manifest what they are by their breach of the unity of the church. The apostle St. John says, *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.* My dear Eusebia, continued he, you have

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been moping here by yourself, which naturally nourishes melancholy. I was desirous that you should accompany us, but was unwilling to press you contrary to your inclination. Your sister was as cheerful as a lark; and so we were all. Bath is truly a most agreeable place, and there was a great deal of good company.

I told my father, that with his leave I would go and see my friend Miss Barnwell, as I had heard she was just come from London, where she had been nearly nine months.

By all means, replied my father. I wish, my child, you may become as brisk and as cheerful as Miss Barnwell; and I see no reason why you should not.

Indeed, Madam, I am a sad coward; I do not know how I could suffer martyrdom for Christ. I fully intended, when we began this conversation, to inform my father that I was a protestant; but I was just as if my tongue was tied. My dear father is a most tender parent, and his compassion and benevolence to the poor scarcely know any bounds; but you perceive what his hope of eternal life is built upon. My dear friend, join your prayers with mine, that the foundation of his hope may be the rock of ages; or that work of the Redeemer, which he declared to be finished, when he bowed his head, and expired.

I was lately conversing with Thomas, about my leaving the church of Rome, and the probable consequences of my father's displeasure. My friend, said he, if there be a God whose power and wisdom were exercised in our creation, and whose gracious providence watches over us every moment, let us endeavour to dismiss every disquieting fear, and to put our trust in Him who careth for us. But if there be no God, or if he take no notice of his creatures, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. The hearts of all men are in the hand of him who made them; and how perverse soever they may be, they never fail to bring forward the execution of his purposes. God has been unfolding and accomplishing his designs concerning you every moment of your life; and he will exercise his

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care over you during the endless ages of eternity. You have no reason, therefore, to be distressed, unless you think, either that his purposes concerning you are not wise and good, or that he will not be able to accomplish them.

O Thomas, replied I, that neither of these is the case I am abundantly convinced; but you must grant that the servants of Jesus Christ have undergone many dreadful trials. I am terrified at the consciousness of my own weakness.

You are afraid, answered he, that when God formed his plan, he did not consider the smallness of your strength.

I am indeed a foolish creature, Thomas, cried I; but God is all-sufficient. I desire, therefore, to be as clay in his hands, that he may fashion me as he pleases, and do with me whatsoever seemeth good in his sight.

I think it a great mercy, Madam, that I have learned to spin, which I did for my amusement. Either that or my needle would, with the divine blessing, procure me the necessaries of life, if I could not obtain a servant's place where I could be useful. Time will soon pass away:—that time which God has allotted for the trial of his servants. Pray for me, my dear friend, that I may endure as seeing him who is invisible, and that I may come out of the furnace like gold seven times refined.

Thomas and his wife desire their dutiful respects. How cheerful and happy they are with their scanty pittance! Their humble dwelling is comfortable and clean. I think I could be very happy in as humble a situation, if it were provided for me by my heavenly Father. I am more and more convinced that riches are not so valuable as mankind in general think them. When a wise man considers the pride and idleness, the voluptuousness and diseases, commonly attendant upon them, and also how difficult it is for the rich to enter into the kingdom of heaven, he will endeavour to moderate his desire of that deceitful mammon. Thus speaks my better judgment: but I find, with Paul, a law in my members warring against

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the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin. When I would do good, and when I wish to think of divine things, I too frequently find evil to be present with me; so that I also am obliged to cry out, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I bless God for the gospel, which alone gives a satisfactory answer to this question.

I am, dear Madam,
Most sincerely yours,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XIV.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

THROUGH the kind providence of God I am safely arrived at Barnwell: I can scarcely say at home; for never was there a parent more altered than my father. The cause which is assigned is, that I am so different from what I was; but in truth, though that may be some, it is only a small part of the reason. All the way upon the road my father did nothing but talk to me upon the subject of marriage. He was determined, he said, to have me married, as that, he had no doubt, would cure all my religious whims! and by mere accident he had seen a gentleman at the play, whom I knew very well, with whom he spent the next evening at the tavern, where all the conversation was about me. He has promised to come and see you, continued my father, when we are at home. Indeed he was desirous of visiting you at your aunt's, but I put him off with telling him that you were out upon a visit, lest your aunt or you should have begun about religion, and have sickened him at the outset.

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It was not till after we had arrived at home that I was informed who this gentleman was; for I had no inclination to make any inquiry about him. The place where my father met him sufficiently indicated his character. And pray, Madam, who do you think it is? No other than the only son of Mr. Clifford of Poplar-Grange. I dare say you have seen him several times at our house. He has been two or three years upon his travels: and now he is returned, my father tells me it is his determination to marry, and to become a domestic animal for the remainder of his life, since he is weary of the impertinence and knavery of foreigners. When I told him, added he, that I would make him a present of my daughter, he took hold of my hand, and said he would keep me to my word, for Miss Barnwell would be just such a wife as he should wish for.

I replied, that I was fearful Mr. Clifford would not be such a husband as I should wish for.

There are very few ladies in this country, replied my father, who would say No, if they had the offer. He is not only a handsome, well-bred gentleman, but he also possesses the main chance. His uncle, who died lately, has left him a capital mansion, and a good thousand a year, which is independent of what he will have at the death of his father.

All this, Sir, replied I, may be, and I believe is true; but as I never intend to marry any person without your consent, I hope you will give me the liberty to refuse one that is not agreeable to me. Christianity is with me an indispensable qualification: but Mr. Clifford, if he be like his father, as I suppose, Sir, he is, does not profess to be a Christian.

Nay, Miranda, said my father, there I know you are mistaken. You think he is no Christian because his father never goes to church: but I know Charles was christened, for I was at the christening; and, if I do not mistake, I was one of his godfathers. But observe, in this I will be obeyed: I have set my heart upon it, and therefore I will not suffer you to dispute my authority: so

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when he comes I desire you to be cheerful, and to receive him as you ought.

I held my peace, for I knew I ought to do that when I was commanded: but I cannot think of marrying an irreligious man, merely because he is rich, handsome, and well-bred. I would much rather live as I am all my days than be a dutchess, if my husband were an ungodly, atheistical libertine. I believe, therefore, I shall soon let Mr. Clifford know, if he should pay his addresses to me, that I cannot accept his offer.

'I have been thinking of the great vanity which there is in every thing the world produces, except wholesome, plain food, clothing proper for the season, and a house just large enough for the family which inhabits it. I pray that my desires may never be so intemperate as to suffer me to think that I want any real earthly good, so long as my heavenly Father gives me these necessary things. A thousand a year Mr. Clifford has already, and a noble house, and much more in expectation. Some persons would tell me, that such an ample fortune would not only be for my own advantage, but for the benefit of my children. I hope I should have that love for my children, which every parent ought to have: but if their father taught them, by his example, to be irreligious, or if my heavenly Father should punish me with irreligious children, for daring to accept an ungodly husband merely because he was rich, handsome, and well-bred, all the wealth in the Indies would not be a compensation either to them or to myself. What comfort could I take in worldly possessions, when I saw my children travelling to everlasting destruction? It is true I might have ungodly children if I married a Christian: but the probability of it would be less; for I should suppose that God in general gathers his elect from the posterity of his servants, by blessing their godly examples and instructions, as he usually does every other mean of his own appointment. Besides, if I were conscious that I had done what I ought by marrying only in the Lord, at the worst I could not reproach myself with being instrumental in their

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perdition by an unrighteous love of wealth and grandeur; so that it is a fixed point with me; I am determined, with the divine assistance, to give Mr. Clifford no encouragement. He shall be the domestic animal, as he terms it, of somebody else. A smaller house, less money, and a husband less polite, will do very well for me.

But you little think, my dear aunt, what is the reason that I am to be married in such haste. The minute we arrived at home my father went to Mr. Pink's, and I dare say stayed there an hour. I have no doubt but Miss Pink is to be my mother-in-law; for the footman told me this morning, in confidence, that his master had sent several letters directly to her while they were in Jamaica. I should be greatly distressed, did I not know that nothing comes to pass by chance, but that all the affairs of the children of men are directed by an unseen hand. Charlotte Pink is but two-and-twenty; for I know she is only two years older than I. She is not only too young to be a suitable wife for my father, but is the last person in the world I would wish to call mother. She has a scornful look, and she and her sisters dress as if they were to have a thousand a year for their fortune; yet it is well known that Mr. Pink cannot make his fortune maintain him. I should not mention these things did they not so nearly concern me; for I think the rule to speak evil of no one does not mean, merely, that we ought not to propagate falsehoods to their disadvantage, but that we should keep our mouths as with a bridle where telling the truth would be to their dishonour, except where our silence would be the occasion of their injuring others.

I was persuaded, or rather commanded, by my father, to go to church yesterday with him. Mr. Law, our rector, preached from these words of Peter, *Add to your faith virtue*, 2 Pet. i. 5. We had a florid discourse, which lasted about fifteen minutes, in which he endeavoured to show, that a virtuous life is its own reward in the present world, by preventing a thousand evils which are entailed upon vice, and by recommending us to the esteem, not only of

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good men, but even of the wicked, who are never so abandoned as not to reverence a virtuous character, however they may be hurried on by the impetuosity of their passions to act contrary to their judgment. He also observed, that a virtuous life ensures the divine favour; and that every benevolent and worthy action will be a jewel in that crown which the virtuous will wear hereafter.—Charity does not oblige me to call this an evangelical discourse; for, instead of excluding boasting, which is the design of the gospel, it admitted and encouraged it, and was contrary to the word of God, which informs us, that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified.

There is a Mr. Lowe, a Baptist minister, who preaches here. I must endeavour to go and hear him; for I shall not be willing to countenance by my presence another gospel than that of the apostles. If preachers of a mere heathen morality be under the curse of God, their abettors cannot be guiltless, especially if they know better.

I expect to see our dear friend here soon, as I have sent her word that I am at home. I hope, my dear aunt, that you bear your loss with becoming fortitude. It is appointed by our heavenly Father that we should enter his kingdom through much affliction; and we ought to be willing that our trials should be what and when he pleases.

Dear Madam,

I am your dutiful niece,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XV.

From Miss Miranda Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

MY DEAR AUNT,

I KNOW you have been in expectation of hearing whether I have had a suitor, and what has been the result. Yes, Madam, Mr. Clifford has been here, and has received such

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an answer as a person of his importance would little expect. My father is very angry that I refused him, notwithstanding he acknowledged himself to be a deist. It was happy for me that my dear Eusebia was here, or I do not know what would have been the consequence.

I repeatedly told Mr. Clifford, that I wished, both for his own sake and mine, that he would not continue his addresses, since I should not consent to be his wife.

What, was I already engaged?

I answered, No.

Had any person traduced his character, or spoken any thing to his disadvantage? I ought to tell him, that he might have an opportunity of doing himself justice.

I replied, that that was no part of my reason for refusing him; and I begged him to cease inquiry, since I might have objections which it would be improper for him to know. I further said, that as I was obliged to him for his good opinion of me, it would give me pain to offend him.

He paused, laying his hand upon his forehead. You surprise me, Madam, cried he; the cause of your refusal originates in me, otherwise your telling me could not offend me. If my person is not to your liking, or you think my fortune less than you have a right to expect, I beg you to tell me ingenuously, and I promise not to be offended.

Forbear, Sir, replied I, to ask me, I beseech you. However, I ought to tell you, that neither of the reasons you have mentioned is in any measure the ground of my objection.

Indeed, Miss Barnwell, cried he, I am not so much of an Œdipus as to find out your riddle. Then, holding up his fingers, he said, My finger-nails are not turned into the fangs of a wild beast, and yet, Madam, you seem to take me for one of the shaggy savages of the desert.

Indeed, Sir, I replied, I view you in the best light I am able. There are many of my sex whom you may make happy; but I am not of that number.

You alarm me, Madam, cried he; for I perceive by a tear, that you are very much in earnest. I humbly en-

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treat, I beg as a friend, that you will make me acquainted with the reason of your rejecting me; and I promise, on my part, if there be any weight in it, I will acquiesce, whatever pain it may give me.

The real case then, Sir, is this; I found you, as I had too much reason to expect, destitute, unhappily for yourself, of the fear of God. And, as I reverence that Divine Being who gave me the life which I enjoy, and who, I trust, will give me eternal life, I am not willing to have a husband who would retard me in my Christian course.

All this may be very well, replied he, blushing, and, as I thought, a little angry; but who made you a judge? I suppose it is God only who knows the heart.

True, Sir, answered I, the heart is known to God only, until the mouth manifest what is in it, and then it is known to men also. The minute you rode into the yard, I observed that, on some account, you cursed your dog; and since you have been here, I have heard you use the divine name irreverently, by crying, O Lord! and O God! As you are thus guilty of taking that sacred name in vain, I infer that you are destitute of a just fear of that God before whose bar we must all stand.

Being thus reproved, he stood motionless. At length, resuming courage, Madam, cried he, I must allow your reproof to be in some measure just: at the same time truth obliges me to declare, that I have never been a common swearer: I have always esteemed it to be beneath a gentleman so far to put himself upon a level with the dregs of the people.

I commend you, Sir, replied I; but if ever I give away my heart and my hand, it shall be to one who abhors an oath, or any approach towards such profaneness, merely because it is a sin against God.

To be sure, Madam, that is right; but—

But, Sir, you know your own condition: if there was the least weight in my objection, you promised to acquiesce.

He replied, that if he had known me to be so scrupulously nice, he would have endeavoured not to offend me.

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That is, replied I, you would have endeavoured to deceive me. But, Mr. Clifford, such a wife will be the most suitable for you, as will be far from being offended at greater faults than these; and the world is full enough of such ladies.

He then told me, with a smile, that if he was such a sad creature as I represented him, it would be an act of charity to take him, that he might be benefited by my example as well as by my precepts.

I assured him, with a determined tone, that it was not a jesting matter, and that he might depend upon it I should abide by what I had said; while at the same time I wished him much happiness with any other person, and should be always happy to see him as a neighbour.

I must confess, Miss Barnwell, cried he, you are something singular. Well! if I am so bad a commodity, I must endeavour to make the best of myself.

When we were at tea, this gentleman had I believe the vanity to think he could make me and my friend proselytes to deism, or rather atheism. In speaking of his travels, he took occasion to observe, that to converse with men of different countries and religions was the best thing in the world to enlarge the mind, and to set it free from those prejudices which spring up in the nursery, and are watered by priests: all of whom, said he, if you will believe them, propagate the only true religion, whether they be Catholics or Protestants, Greeks or Armenians, Turks or Gentoos.

Every man of sense, Sir, cried my father, has long been convinced, that priests of all religions are the same.

I do not know, said Mr. Clifford, whether, if we do them strict justice, we ought to rank them all together; since the priests of those religions which have done the least damage to mankind ought to have the preference. I say, the least damage; for the wisest men in all countries think it a disputable point whether any of them have done much good.

Mr. Clifford, cried my father, looking at me, is a man

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after my own heart. I have no fault to find with my girl, continued he, turning to that gentleman, except on account of some religious whims. With regard to myself, I think that honesty, if we talk for ever, is the sum of all religion.

Most religions, Sir, said Mr. Clifford, would fall dreadfully short, were they to be measured by that rule; for honesty requires people to do as they would be done by.

Well, girls, cried my father, looking at Eusebia and me, what do you say to that?

We only say, Sir, replied my friend, that this gentleman is not obliged to prove his assertion; if he were, he would be obliged to undertake a more difficult task than he is able to perform.

Observe, Mr. Barnwell, said he, that I have received a challenge.—Well, Madam, you will please to remember that I neither assert nor deny the truth of any religion. All that I have said amounts to this, that the different religions which have been propagated in the world have in general been unfriendly to mankind. I am sorry that truth obliges me to declare, that if that is the best which has been the least hurtful, this negative goodness will fall to the share of paganism. Paganism, at the time when Christianity first appeared, was the religion not only of the whole Roman empire, the beggarly province of Judea excepted, but also of the whole globe. The inhabitants of the most distant climes, whose customs were the most opposite to each other, who worshipped the Deity under different names and characters expressive of his various attributes, and who showed their respect to him by ceremonies peculiar perhaps to the country in which they had been educated, were rendered so friendly and sociable by the charitable and humane principles of their religion, that they either worshipped and venerated each other's gods, or they agreed to differ, and worship their own, leaving others to do the like, without any heart-burnings or ill-will on account of their being of different sentiments. I might make the same observation concerning the reli-

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gion first introduced by Mahomet, the extent of which is far greater than that of Christianity. The founder of this sect professedly taught from the first, that it was the will of God that the Mahometan faith should be propagated by the sword. Yet wherever he or his followers turned their victorious arms, those who could not be persuaded to embrace their tenets were only compelled to pay a trifling tax; so that Christians of every denomination may now live in the exercise of their various modes of worship with greater safety in the dominions of the Grand Seignior, than in any country in Christendom, the United States of America excepted.—Now, ladies, behold the contrast. Since Christianity has been introduced into the world, the most inhuman cruelties have attended its footsteps. Wherever it has been received, nation has been against nation, province against province, sect against sect, family against family, and one part of a family against the other. I am not insensible that much may be said against paganism, especially by Christians, whom I acknowledge the pagans used with severity, though not on account of their professing a different religion, for nothing of that kind gave them offence. The Romans laughed at the Egyptians for worshipping gods that grew in their gardens, and they carried their resentment no further: but the Christians and Jews they abhorred on account of their narrow, bigoted principles; for they would allow none to be the favourites of heaven but themselves. The same narrow, bigoted sentiments, which rendered them odious in the eyes of the pagans, have caused them to exercise the most inhuman cruelties upon each other: so that wherever Christianity has gained a settlement, superstition, avarice, and hatred, the three worst furies that ever plagued mankind, have set up their baleful empire; and fires, tortures, gibbets, and prisons, have followed in their train. The question, therefore, concerning any or all of these religions, is not, and ought not to be, whether they are true, but what good they have done; since every thing is valuable in proportion as it is useful.

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Here the champion of paganism and the false prophet stopped. That which grieved me most was, my father shewed his approbation by crying, Bravo! and clapping his hands. He also said, These are facts; there is no denying of facts: facts are stubborn things.

True, Mr. Barnwell, replied my friend; but before you pass judgment it becomes you to hear the other side.

Mr. Clifford, continued she, I have attended to all that you have said, which indeed is all that can be said to the prejudice of Christianity with any colour of justice. You have shown that the first Christians were so unsociable, that they would worship no God but their own, and that they suffered persecution on that account. This their Founder taught them to expect. At the same time he prohibited them from returning any thing but good for evil, and blessing for cursing, and commanded them to pray for those who evil intreated and persecuted them. You have acknowledged that Christians have been persecuted by pagans, who appear to be your favourites; but you have not proved that pagans have been persecuted by Christians.

Be it so, said he, you must acknowledge that Christians have persecuted each other.

Whom do you call Christians? replied my friend. If you give that name to all that have been so denominated by themselves or others, I grant your conclusion.

Pray, Madam, said Mr. Clifford, whom do *you* call Christians?

Those, replied Eusebia, who imbibe the doctrine, the precepts, and the example of Christ. Did he by any of these teach his followers to destroy or injure those who believed not?

Indeed, Madam, answered he, I cannot, I will not charge him with any such thing. But will you deny all those to be Christians who have been concerned in persecution?

I might, said she, deny the far greater part of them to be such, without doing them any wrong. And if some few good men have been drawn into those practices, it has been

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because they "knew not what manner of spirit they were of." What they have done of this kind, they have done not only without, but against the authority of Christ; Christianity, therefore, is not chargeable with their inconsistencies.

I acknowledge, Madam, said he, you seem to have the better of the argument; but if the case be as you have represented it, there are but very few Christians.

There are just so many, Sir, said she, as there are persons who are habitually influenced by the spirit and temper of Christ. It is to be lamented that Christians are not constantly so influenced; but that unhappily there have been instances in which they have been guilty of the grossest sins, and of persecution among the rest, and have thereby deviated from the Christian character.

And pray, my kind instructress, cried Mr. Clifford, where do Christians live? I have travelled over a considerable part of Europe, and I never found any, except indeed I have found them now.

You need not wonder at that, Sir, replied she, if you consider that it is one of the properties of the servants of Jesus Christ to be unknown. The Jews did not know their Messiah, and therefore crucified him; and the apostle John observed, that *the world knew them not, because it knew him not.*

All this, cried he, is new to me, I assure you, Madam: but pray what do you think of the bulk of those who are denominated Christians?

O, cried my father, I can tell you that: they give us all to the devil.

I beg, Mr. Barnwell, interrupted Mr. Clifford, that you will permit this amiable lady and me to finish our conversation; for these are very important matters. Pray, Madam, be kind enough to answer my question?

The world, Sir, replied my friend, is represented in Scripture as the kingdom of Satan; and the bulk of mankind are his subjects, and are engaged in the service of their father and sovereign. To this great company these

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three furies you mentioned belong. Their religion is superstition and self-dependence; their godliness, gain; and they not only hate the children of God, but each other also; for though in general the world loves its own, as you, Sir, showed in the case of the pagans, yet when their desires or their interests have clashed, they have given numerous proofs that they could murder each other with very little remorse. I will appeal to you, Sir, if the history of the world, both ecclesiastical and civil, be not a history of men resembling infernal spirits.

There, Sir, exclaimed my father laughing, did I not tell you what would become of us?

Indeed, Mr. Barnwell, said he, this is a serious affair. I have frequently thought that the evil of which the religion of Jesus Christ appeared to me to have been the cause, sufficiently demonstrated that it was not of God; but it now appears that his followers have been the sufferers, and not the actors, in those inhuman tragedies.—But, my good friend, addressing himself to Eusebia, according to this view of things, a person cannot be a Christian unless he be a saint.

You judge rightly, Sir, replied Eusebia; for if the apostles were saints, those who believe and practise as they did must be saints also.

Mr. Clifford bowed to my dear friend, and acknowledged that she had acquitted herself well.—But, cried he, Christianity is too sublime a thing for me to think of attaining to it; I should be almost as much discouraged as if I were going to take a voyage to the moon.

You, my friend, exclaimed my father, are too honest for it: these saints, Sir, are the most arrant villains in nature. Here my father mentioned several persons whom he called saints, merely because they were Presbyterians, which is the name that he gives to all dissenters, and who he said to his certain knowledge had become bankrupts, and ruined their creditors, who were ten times more honest than themselves without being saints. It is indeed a great wound to religion, when dissenters act improperly. The

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misconduct of a few persons who are not of the established religion, will always be placed by the enemies of godliness to the account of dissenters at large; whereas the dissenters are a great body of people, and, as might be expected, have many persons among them who differ in nothing from the worst of mankind, except perhaps in doing in a sly and hypocritical manner those things which wicked men in the establishment, who neither fear nor regard reproof, do in the face of the sun.

I am glad that our dear friend so fully confuted Mr. Clifford; and I am not a little pleased that he was ingenuous enough to confess it; for it too frequently happens in disputes, that pride stands its ground after argument is defeated.

When Mr. Clifford was gone, my father asked me what encouragement I had given him; to which I replied, that he had given me very little, by publicly denying the truth of the Christian religion. I received for answer, that I had no concern with his religion; that every person must answer for himself; and a great deal more to the same purpose. But, with the divine assistance, I will sooner suffer every evil that can befall me, than marry either a freethinker, as these gentleman are pleased to call themselves, or a self-dependent pharisaical hypocrite.

Our friend Eusebia unites in love to you, with,

My dear aunt,

Your dutiful niece,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XVI.

From Miss Miranda Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

IT is a week since I wrote my last letter; and as I have received none from you, I am fearful something of a distressing nature has again occurred.

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I am no longer in doubt concerning my father's intention. The morning after Mr. Clifford had been here, when we were by ourselves, Miranda, said he, I desire you to give Mr. Clifford every proper encouragement in the prosecution of his addresses. Assure yourself, that if you should play the fool now, you will not have such an offer any more; for (I will not keep it a secret from you) I am determined to marry again. I believe I should not have thought of such a thing, if you had been as you used to be; but I can take no pleasure in pretenders to religion. I have therefore fixed my eye upon Charlotte Pink: she is a girl after my own heart, and indeed just what you used to be. Therefore I say again, that unless you take time by the forelock, you may chance to die an old maid.

Indeed, Sir, replied I, Mr. Clifford knows my mind. I plainly told him that I would never be married to a person who I had not some reason to believe was a sincere Christian; and this answer you yourself, Sir, must approve, if you wish my happiness. With regard to your marrying, I ought not to dictate to my parent, and tell him what he ought to do. All I will say is this: I think there is too great a disparity in your years; for I know Miss Pink is but about two-and-twenty. With respect to my dying an old maid, as that gives me no concern, I hope Sir, it will give you none; since I well know, that if it be the will of God I should marry, he will provide me a proper husband.

Alas, cried my father, the end I perceive will be this; you will soon offend this gentleman in such a manner, that he will come no more; nay, I question if that be not the case already. Eusebia and you were enough to surfeit him with religion. He pretended to be confuted: yes; he was just as much confuted as I was. Alas! he knows the world: he thought he would please the children; and so he did; and laughed at them, I have no doubt, when he was gone. Men of his reading and knowledge, not to mention his fortune, if they go to see a lady, do not ex-

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pect to clasp their hands before them while they say their catechism.

To this I only replied, that it was possible Mr. Clifford might be as great a hypocrite as my father represented him.—However, his father was here yesterday, and I see no reason to doubt that he really perceived himself to be confuted, and was no hypocrite; which last character I think much worse than that of an infidel, because an infidel is more open to conviction.

Our rector and Mr. Clifford were both at dinner, and spent the afternoon at our house. As our conversation had so displeased my father, I determined to say as little as possible. But though he does not like to hear us talk, he will not suffer us to be silent; for no sooner had Mr. Law said, or rather muttered grace, as it is called, (which consisted of five or six words spoken very fast, and so low, that nobody could tell what was said,) than my father told him, that if he did not take care he would lose one of his flock. I left my daughter, said he, with her aunt, while I was gone to Jamaica, and she has taken her to the meeting, and made her keep company with Presbyterians, till she is ruined; and it signifies nothing what I say; she knows better than I. Miss Eusebia Neville too—I believe I must write to her father; for I dare say my daughter will pervert her, if she has not done it already. I would have all persons keep to the religion to which they were brought up.

Hey! Miss Barnwell, cried the rector, what is this I hear? I always esteemed you the flower of my flock. The dissenters, child! their hearts may be good, though that is a disputable point; but their heads are very weak. The church of England is undoubtedly, and is so esteemed by foreigners, the purest church upon earth: why then should they by unnecessary divisions rend the seamless coat of Christ?

I am not at liberty, sir, replied I, to speak, because I should offend my father; otherwise I have no doubt but I

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could clear myself and the dissenters too, from these aspersions.

Me? cried my father, pray say what you please; I shall be glad if Mr. Law will have the goodness to set you right.

Come, Miss Barnwell, said Mr. Law, tell me what fault you can find with the church of England? You will please to observe, Sir, replied I, that I only proposed to act upon the defensive; but as you desire me to do otherwise, I must truly tell you, that there appear to me to be very few things in which the church of England resembles the New Testament churches.

I suppose, said Mr. Law, that one of those things is, their meeting together for the worship of God.

The principal thing, Sir, replied I, in which the church of England resembles the New Testament churches, appears to me to be, the public reading of the Scriptures. The resemblance in meeting together for the worship of God seems rather questionable. There is no church mentioned in the New Testament, which did not assemble for divine worship in one place: you will not say that the church of England does this. When a church became too numerous to meet in one place, then its members divided; and those who went away formed another church, distinct from, and entirely independent of that which they had left. Christianity was sadly corrupted before any one church or society of Christians, with its bishop, pretended to exercise authority over other churches and their bishops: so that, instead of the church of England's resembling the apostolic churches in this particular, it resembles in it none but the church of Rome, and those other national churches which have copied after that model.

Well done, Madam, cried Mr. Clifford: I will bet fifty guineas on her head, Sir, that she distances you.

Mr. Clifford, replied the rector, I have never had occasion to carry on disputes of this kind; whereas Miss Barnwell, I perceive, is armed cap-a-pee. (Then addressing himself to me) As to the Independents, Madam, whose cause, I perceive, you espouse, they have not a bishop

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among them; whereas every one knows that the primitive churches were governed by bishops; and so is the church of England.

You say, Sir, replied I, that the Independents have not a bishop among them. This I must beg leave to call in question. Every congregational church, whether Baptist or Pedobaptist, has one bishop at least, who presides over it; and some of them have two, or more, as the primitive churches had. Custom has indeed made the term Minister familiar to them; but if you were to ask those ministers whether they are bishops, they would answer in the affirmative. Their having the name of bishop, however, would be of no importance, if their employment and character were not similar to that of the bishops mentioned in the New Testament. But permit me, Sir, to ask, Do the bishops of the church of England resemble the bishops mentioned in the New Testament? Was not the see of those bishops one church or congregation only? Where do we read of archbishops or lord bishops? Nay, was not a bishop expressly prohibited from *lording* it over God's heritage? What would they have thought if they had been told that bishops would arise who would be lords over a thousand congregations? Would they not have cried out, This is antichrist! And would they not have judged rightly? For is not antichrist represented as seated in God's place, and as exercising his authority? Are we to suppose that antichrist dwells only at Rome? He who claims the title of Universal Bishop, is undoubtedly the head of the grand apostacy; but are there not many in England, and other places, who follow his steps? Are there not some, who tread almost upon his heels? And will they not, so far as they are confederates in his guilt, be partakers of his punishment? I am at the same time ready to own, that there have been bishops in the church of England, and even in the church of Rome, who would have been ornaments to any church; for the true nature of Christ's kingdom has not long been clearly discerned. We may therefore say of such, that although they were in those churches, they were not of them.

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I do not like, Madam, replied Mr. Law, to see young persons too positive. You talk much of the New Testament: I wish you understood it better. Pray tell me whether the apostles were bishops of no more churches than one; and also whether they did not go from place to place, to confirm the different churches which they had gathered? In confirmation, therefore, as well as in having bishops over many churches, the church of England agrees exactly with the New Testament churches; while the Independents dissent as much, in these particulars, from the New Testament, as they do from the church of England.

If to be in earnest, Sir, replied I, is to be positive, I esteem it no crime. I have no inclination to offend Mr. Law, or any person living. But you have impressed me into the controversy; and if my sentiments are true, they cannot be defended too earnestly; if false, they deserve not to be defended at all. The apostles, you say, were bishops of several churches. To this, Sir, it may be sufficient to reply, that the apostles were twelve witnesses, sent by Christ to preach the gospel, or to testify what they had seen and heard; that the holy spirit confirmed their testimony by the miraculous powers with which he endowed them; and that the keys of the kingdom of Heaven were delivered to them, by which is denoted the power that they were to exercise, under the direction of the holy Spirit, of binding over to everlasting destruction presumptuous, unbelieving sinners, or loosing men from their iniquities, and placing them in the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Hence it appears, that in their apostolic office, they neither had successors, nor could have any. Their writings, however, like their words, continue to carry life or death wherever they come. They are either the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death; and men will be acquitted or condemned at the bar of God according to their gospel. But tell me, Sir, whom they nominated, or ordained, to succeed them? Or, if they have successors, whether those successors can or dare say as they did, *We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not*

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of God, heareth not us? The bishop of Rome indeed claims the title of Successor of St. Peter, and consistently founds his infallibility, and his power of binding and loosing, on that claim; and it will be difficult to overthrow it, if we once grant that the apostles left any successors to their office. With regard to their going from place to place to confirm the churches which had been gathered through their preaching of the gospel, the plain fact was this: they went to see if they continued in the faith and order in which they had left them, and to confirm them in the truth by preaching the same gospel which they had before preached. Worldly men are ambitious to be uppermost. Those time-serving Christians, therefore, who had found out that it was possible to make a gain of godliness, exalted themselves, with the assistance of their dependants, into a station somewhat resembling that of the apostles, and pretended to be their successors. But when, after they were thus exalted, they found nothing to do for which they were qualified, they fixed upon the going of the apostles from place to place to confirm the churches, as that which would furnish them with a plea for usurping their office, and, in imitation of them, as they pretended, went round their dioceses, in a lordly manner, and at stated times, to lay their hands on the heads of ignorant children.

I see, Madam, cried Mr. Law, you have imbibed the poison of fanaticism. Alas! what will become of our poor church! I may well say with the prophet, that she has brought up children, and they have rebelled against her. She has enemies without, and enemies within. Almost from the time, Mr. Barnwell, that you set off for Jamaica, old Mr. Silverwood, who is nearly superannuated, has employed a methodistical curate. The people, for several miles round, leave their own parish churches, and their lawful ministers, to go to hear him; and old Silverwood is so pleased to see his church crowded, not caring how many neighbouring churches are empty, that he will not dismiss him. Such preachers, I have long observed, make a greater addition to the number of dissenters than is made

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by the preaching of the dissenters themselves. After he has left the place, not one in ten of those who go to hear him will return to their own parish churches; and if we ask them the reason, they will tell us with the greatest effrontery, that we do not preach the gospel, although many of them are so ignorant, that they scarcely know when their book is right end upward.

I do not plead the cause, Sir, replied I, of indecorous behaviour, nor of any thing which is contrary to Christian meekness. But the accusation of which you speak, though it should not always be tempered with meekness, may be just. In that case it is a great mercy when evangelical ministers arise in the church of England. In this I view the hand of God, who, by succeeding their ministerial labours, brings his servants out of that church.

I perceive, cried Mr. Law, that you are determined to show the church of England no favour; so true is the old proverb, that one renegado is worse than ten Turks. But let us proceed to another thing. Are not our articles excellent?

With regard, Sir, to the articles of your church, I acknowledge that for the most part they are a form of sound words; notwithstanding which, I consider them as a great defect in its constitution. It is notorious, that almost all those who are brought up in our public seminaries to the profession of preaching, think they have a right to exercise that profession, whether they believe the gospel or not. The articles were intended by the Reformers to keep unbelievers out of the church; but if, instead of that weak fence, they had made a wall ten times as high, and a hundred times as broad as that of Babylon, unbelievers would have either broken through, or climbed over, as long as emoluments were attached to the clerical office.

Alas, cried my father, religious disputes are generally unprofitable; and after all that is said and done, a person can be no more than honest.

True, Sir, said Mr. Law, honesty and Christianity are synonimous terms. But as for those who leave the

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church, faith, according to them, is every thing, notwithstanding St. James tells us that the devils believe and tremble.

Permit me, Sir, replied I, to ask you, in what manner, after having taken a solemn oath of your belief of the thirty-nine articles, you can justify your preaching in opposition to them?

Here Mr. Clifford cried out, Come, come, Sir, I cannot say, leave off while you are well; but, as a friend, I advise you to leave off before you are worse. What a clever parson I should have made! No; I am too honest to be a parson; I dare say Miss Barnwell thinks I am; don't you, Madam?

I confess, Sir, replied I, if I tell the truth, I have no great opinion of your honesty. That contempt which you have always shown for divine revelation, without sufficiently examining it and praying to God for illumination, demonstrates that you have been unfaithful in the management of that talent which the supreme Lord of all entrusted to your care. Thus, Sir, you have been dishonest to your own soul, and to the soul of your son. I confess, if in this state of unbelief you had undertaken the care of the souls of others for the sake of filthy lucre, you would have received the greater condemnation; but as it is, you are very unwise and very dishonest. Moreover, Sir, you do not treat things of infinite moment with that seriousness which might be expected from your years, and which their importance demands.

There, Sir, cried Mr. Law, I am glad you have come in for your share of correction. But I desire to know, Madam, how, according to the doctrine of Calvin, Mr. Clifford can be blameable for being an unbeliever; since, if he be destitute of faith, he is only without that which God has not been pleased to give him?

Well done, cried my father, I will be bound for it, Mr. Law, you have set her fast there.

Alas, my dear father, said I, every argument which is opposed to divine revelation is like flax opposed to the de-

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vouring fire. You will acknowledge, Mr. Law, that if a man was arraigned for murder, and he were to plead that he was naturally choleric and revengeful, it would rather aggravate than extenuate his crime. In like manner, a man can only plead at the bar of God, that he was an unbeliever, because he was naturally wicked, and had no taste for divine and heavenly things. But this plea will be inadmissible. *Why*, said our Lord to the unbelieving Jews, *even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?*

Tea was now brought in, which put an end to the controversy.

Our friend Eusebia is writing to you, and will give you an account of the conversation she had with Mr. Clifford.

My dear aunt, I ever remain
Your dutiful niece,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XVII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I CONTINUE at Barnwell, where I expected to have received, before this time, a letter from my kind friend. I hope no new misfortune has prevented it. But if that should have been the case, I am certain that my dear Mrs. Worthington will not be too much dejected. The affliction, which you have experienced, has taught you and me, that there is no setting our nest on high out of the reach of evil, any otherwise than by laying up our treasure in Heaven. There only it is secure.

I have been troubling myself about what will be the consequence after I return home. I intend to suffer any thing which God shall permit to come upon me, rather

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than by my attendance countenance an idolatrous worship. I have through the divine mercy been much supported by the scriptural declaration, that *all things work together for good to them that love God*; and also by what our Lord said to Martha, *Thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.* I believe we are naturally too prone to be harassed and distressed about evils, which peradventure will never be permitted to befall us, how inevitable soever we may think them; which, if they do come, we may be supported under in such a manner as we could scarcely have thought of; or from which an unexpected way may be prepared for our escape. If, Madam, we possess that pearl of great price which a wise merchant would sell all that he has to purchase, it becomes us to do our duty in our present circumstances, and then resign ourselves entirely to the will of God; since he who has given his own Son to die for us, will not suffer us to want any thing that is really for our advantage.

Your niece has given you an account of her conversation with Mr. Law nearly as it was conducted; only I perceive she has omitted some few things spoken by her father not at all to his honour as a Christian. She undoubtedly suppressed them because he is her father, and because it is therefore her duty to cast a veil over his infirmities. Mr. Law gave the first offence by reviling the dissenters. Notwithstanding he is what is called a good-natured man, I perceived by some hints he dropped while we were at tea, that he could hardly bear several things that Miranda had said. At length, Mr. Clifford exclaimed, I really think, Sir, that Miss Barnwell has treated you with all the decency and respect the nature of the controversy would admit. The slut used me with some severity: but I always say that a man should never either dispute, or attempt to be a member of parliament, until he is prepared to hear the worst that can be said, both of himself and of the cause he defends.

The old gentleman, who loves to talk, said to Mr. Barn-

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well after Mr. Law was gone, Pray, Sir, is this young lady always so sparing of her words? I think, Madam, (turning to me,) those lips have not been unclosed since dinner, except to admit the edge of the painted porcelain.

Ah, my friend, cried Mr. Barnwell, shaking his head, if you had heard her and your Charles the other evening, I dare say you would have thought her a proper counterpart to Ben Jonson's silent woman.

Well, said Mr. Clifford, this makes good an observation which I have often made, that if persons know how to hold their tongue, it is almost certain they know how to talk. My Charles, continued he, says a great deal about you: but as I love a woman should be humble, I believe I shall keep it a secret. This, however, I must say; he was so altered when he came home, that I should not have known him, if his face had been changed as much as his mind.

I am glad to hear it, Sir, replied I.

I do not know, Madam, said he, why you should. For my part, I do not see much necessity for it. Except in the article of religion, my boy is not a very faulty character. He is brave, generous, and humane, and neither a drunkard nor a debauchee; and these are great matters as times go. With regard to religion, I was early set against it myself, by seeing it made a trade of. Do you think the parson believes a tittle more of Christianity than I do? No, nor half of them; nor yet a tenth part of the other half. I am amazed, therefore, at their impudence, in undertaking to make others believe what they do not believe themselves; and much more so at their claiming wages, when they are conscious they deserve the pillory as impostors. Who in their senses can receive or believe a religion, which is made as mere a craft of as that of Demetrius the shrine-maker?

I am sorry, Mr. Clifford, answered I, that you cannot distinguish between the pure religion of Jesus Christ and the corruption of it, especially, as that corruption was foretold in the Revelation as minutely as if that book had been

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written in modern times. It was there predicted, that the kings of the earth would support a set of spiritual merchants, who should traffic in the souls of men. Your seeing this, Sir, come to pass, ought rather to have confirmed you in the truth of the Christian religion than have caused you to doubt it.

Yes, Madam, said he, but (you will pardon me) the miracles which have been wrought by holy jugglers in your church, many of whom have been detected in their pious frauds, are enough to make one sick of miracles. It would be a miracle indeed if I should ever believe in miracles.

Do you think, Sir, replied I, that it would be wise to conclude, from the number of counterfeit shillings, that there have been no real ones? I am sure you do not. On the contrary, the existence of counterfeits is a proof that there have been those which were genuine. But with respect to false miracles, the Scripture also informs us, that the coming of antichrist was to be *after the working of Satan, with all powers, and signs, and lying wonders;* so that if wicked men had not arisen, impiously imitating the mighty power of God in their pious frauds as you justly call them, a powerful evidence would have been lost of the truth of those miracles which are recorded in Scripture.

And pray, Miss Neville, said he, who do you think antichrist is?

A body of people, Sir, replied I, who, under the name of Christ, are in reality opposed to Christ: and such is the church of Rome, and every other church which so far agrees with it as to render Christianity subservient to its own ambitious purposes.

I did not hesitate, Madam, to speak the truth; for I knew it must soon be discovered that I am what is called a heretic.

Mr. Barnwell was surprised. Are you in earnest, Miss Neville, said he, or in jest? I have thought ever since you have been here, that you have talked differently from what you used to do; but I am now convinced you are as much a protestant as I am. I suppose this is my daughter's do-

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ing. I dare say she will receive no thanks from your father. Indeed, Madam, I think every person ought to keep to the religion to which he was brought up.

I have had a dispute with my son, said Mr. Clifford, concerning your being a catholic or a protestant; but I find I was in the wrong. He was positive, whatever your friends were, that you were not a catholic. Well, ladies, you have almost made a convert of him between you: I doubt you will not have the same success with me. Now, for instance, Miss Neville, can you seriously think that a person could possibly be restored to life after he began to putrify, as Lazarus did, and indeed must do after, in so warm a climate, he had been dead four days? I fear you will not give me so good an answer as when I asked who antichrist was. There, indeed, you hit the nail on the head; for a tribe of hireling state-priests would, I confess, be no honour to any religion.

I saw a poor man, replied I, some time past, who had found a watch that had been run over by the wheels of a waggon, and both sides of which were nearly crushed together. Do you think, Sir, he would be able to repair it?

I think he would not, replied he.

But although, Sir, said I, this poor man might not be able to repair it, you will not deny that it was in the power of the maker to repair it. Apply this to the case of Lazarus. You and I should indeed have been foiled if we had attempted to raise Lazarus from the dead; but he who made him was able to do it. Indeed, Sir, I may truly say of you, as Christ said to the Sadducees, who also disbelieved the resurrection, That you err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.

I must confess, Madam, answered he, that the comparison is plausible, though not quite convincing; since I know very well that a watch is made by a watch-maker, but I have not equal reason, nor indeed any reason to believe, that he who was said to restore Lazarus to life was he who made him. I acknowledge, indeed, that the Scriptures, speaking concerning Jesus, declare that all things

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were created by him and for him, and that he is the true God and eternal life; and I despise the meanness of those, who, in order to make the writings of the followers of Jesus tenable, explain away their obvious meaning. They would act more like honest men, if they either received the whole, or rejected them, as I do, altogether.

I am of your mind, Sir, answered I, in that respect. But notwithstanding I approve of your not endeavouring to corrupt the Scriptures, I am sorry that you should reject them altogether, or in any measure; since, although they should prove to have no foundation in truth, I am better off than you, because at least they render me happy in this world: but in case they should prove true, as I doubt not they will, you will be miserable, and I happy, in another. However, Sir, you may fancy that Jesus of Nazareth and his disciples were deceivers, you can have no assurance that that was the case; no, nor yet any foundation supported by the least probability that it was so. Therefore, Mr. Clifford is playing a desperate game, in which he has staked his soul against a feather; yes, Sir, and much less than a feather. For I can tell him what he may think to be a secret; he is very unhappy, and frequently wishes he had never existed, and even envies the happiness of the dog that follows him, and of the horse upon which he rides. He indeed strives to put away these thoughts that trouble him; but, like the stone of the fabled Sisyphus, they return upon him.

I must acknowledge, Madam, replied he, for I love to be ingenuous, that I have not been so happy as I could have wished. It is far from being pleasant to live in doubt and uncertainty, and to have all our views bounded by the grave; and I confess, I should not like when I leave the world to take a leap in the dark, if it could be prevented. But I endeavour to bear with fortitude those evils which cannot be avoided. Besides, no mortal can believe what he pleases; we assent or deny, in all cases, according to

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the evidence which is brought to support or invalidate the matter in question.

I told Mr. Clifford, that if this was true, then unbelief was certainly no sin. Or rather, said I, there would be no such person as a deist where the gospel is preached, or as an atheist where the sun enlightens the earth. But shall we say, that the Supreme Being has not sufficiently manifested his eternal power and godhead in the things which he has made? Does not the return of day and night, and of the different seasons, demonstrate, that he who made, still governs the universe? The heavenly bodies, together with this earth, notwithstanding their amazing magnitude, and their distance from each other, perform their revolutions with such exactness, that it would be dishonouring them to compare them with the most curious timepiece that has ever been invented. The eye, the ear, the hand! The creatures made for our use, and the food provided for their sustenance! But why do I mention the proofs of a God? The evidence is infinite. And yet, Sir, we find, that men do not assent to this truth in any proportion to its evidence. Sin has so biassed our judgments, that foolish men still say in their hearts, if not with their lips, that there is no God. The evidence also of the truth of revelation is not rejected because of its weakness, but in consequence of human depravity. That sacred book begins with an account of the creation of the world, and of the fall of our first parents, of which last truth we see and feel the dire effects every day. The next important thing recorded is, a promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, accompanied with a declaration that there would be two different kinds of people in the world, between whom there should be a continual enmity. This is a summary view of the Old and New Testament.

Mr. Barnwell, who had been silent some time, cried out, well, Miss Neville, you may stop now; my friend and I are to be given to the devil, I know very well, without

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your saying any thing else. You, and my daughter, and her aunt, and perhaps half a score more, are the elect; and Mr. Clifford, and I, and every body else, are reprobates. Tell the truth, Madam; is not that your sentiment?

I have no right, answered I, to say, that the greatest sinner on earth is a reprobate; since mercy is proclaimed in the gospel to the chief of sinners. Nor has any person on earth reason to conclude himself a reprobate, unless he have formed a settled resolution to trample under foot the blood of the Saviour; and even thousands, I am persuaded, of this description, have had their fetters knocked off, and have been brought into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God. You perceive, Sir, I do not confine the number of those who will be saved, to myself and nine or ten more, as you say I do.

I beg, Mr. Barnwell, said Mr. Clifford, you will not interrupt us. You will oblige me, Madam, by resuming the subject.

I have told you, Sir, replied I, or I meant to tell you, that the whole of divine revelation is little more than an account of the methods which God has taken to accomplish his promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. Abraham was informed that this seed, in which all the families of the earth were to be blessed, would descend from him. The sacrifices under the law, were the gospel preached to the Israelites. And all the prophets, though they lived in different ages, agreed in declaring, that a glorious Personage would arise for the deliverance of Israel and of the Gentiles: yet they seemed to damp the hopes of the Jews, by showing them that he would be a sufferer, as well as a lawgiver and deliverer. If that people had understood these prophecies, they would not have been fulfilled: but they almost universally expected that the Messiah would deliver them from the Roman yoke, and make them a great and flourishing nation. These prejudices were not eradicated from the breasts of the disciples till after the resurrection of

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Christ. It is plain from the prophetic writings, examined without prejudice, that the Messiah came to destroy the kingdom of Satan; and that, though he was to exalt his followers, they were not to be great in the present world. The life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Saviour, exactly correspond to the prophecies concerning him. If it be asked, why then the Jews did not believe? I answer, The prophet Isaiah had long before declared that the divine report would not be believed: that the Messiah would be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and that his nation would hide their faces from, and despise him. *Surely*, says the same prophet, *he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* It appears to me, Sir, continued I, that the world was created with no other view than that it might be the stage of this grand transaction, compared with which, the sun, moon, and stars, yea, heaven and earth, and angels and men, hide their diminished heads. Believe me, Sir, I would not, for one year only, be in that state of doubt and uncertainty wherein you are, if I might be made empress of the globe.

I believe you, said he, to be in earnest: but your years are nothing. The older you grow, the less able you will be to believe such things as shock your reason. Alas, my child, this earth is a mole-hill if compared with the sun, or with some of the planets which revolve around him: and what are they when compared with the universe! I have always thought it a very sublime expression of the prophet Isaiah, that in comparison of the Deity, the na-

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tions are as the drop of a bucket. Reason tells us, that you and I, and even our earth and all its inhabitants, are infinitely beneath his notice; yea, more so than the ants in a mole-hill are beneath ours.

We never run into greater errors, Sir, replied I, than when we measure the Almighty by ourselves. You think if you were so great, you would not condescend to regard things so small. Against such condescension your reason revolts. But reason itself became depraved, and unreasonable, at the fall of our first parents. They reasoned so badly as to imagine that they could hide themselves from the divine presence among the trees of the garden. But when God has renewed us in the spirit of our mind, after his own image, then our reason and divine revelation begin to speak nearly the same language. I believe, therefore, nothing but what is agreeable to my reason. My reason tells me, that however I may disregard the ants in a mole-hill, their Maker does not disregard them, nor yet the smallest microscopic animalcule, shoals of which sport in a drop of water. He would not have created them unless to answer some valuable end, though we, perhaps, are unacquainted with it; nor would he otherwise continue to open his munificent hand, and to give them their meat in due season. With regard to mankind, the most High having given them ability to contemplate both himself and his works, it is reasonable to suppose that he intends to enlarge the number of the Angelic armies from the human race. As to the small spot which we inhabit, peradventure it is the nursery of the universe; and with respect to our weakness, and our wants, they teach us that we can never be above a state of humble dependence. Humility is a virtue of all others the best adapted for the benefit of society, and the best calculated to make us proper companions for him who is infinitely condescending, and who abhors the proud above all other sinners. The character of Jesus Christ was the character of the invisible Jehovah; for he was the brightness of his glory, and the express moral image of his person. If, therefore, he became a descendant of Da-

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vid at a time when the posterity of that prince were reduced to low circumstances, and if he entered his dominions in a stable, we may cease to wonder that he condescended to visit so small a part of his works as this earth.

If I grant all this, answered Mr. Clifford, yet it is highly unreasonable to suppose, that the only-begotten and well-beloved Son of God should come into this world upon so unnecessary an errand as that of making an atonement for sins which had been, and which would be committed. Is it credible that a good and gracious Being would be so inexorable as not to pardon sinners upon repentance, except one suffered for their crimes, and he no less a person than his equal, God manifest in flesh, as Christians term him, and, indeed, justly, if what they call revelation be true? This is to circumscribe the power of the Deity, and to make it less than that of an earthly magistrate, who can pardon offenders upon the hopes of amendment.

I am persuaded, Sir, replied I, that Satan, when he had seduced our first parents, supposed that their ruin was inevitable, and that it was beyond the power of God to restore them to his favour. An earthly magistrate can, and frequently does pardon very atrocious crimes; however, when he does so, justice itself suffers. But our God cannot imitate his creatures in doing wrong; for a power to act improperly and unjustly would imply weakness and imperfection. Therefore, if God saved sinners, it was necessary he should do it in a way of justice; and as, in all his works with which we are acquainted, he has done every thing in the nearest as well as the best way, my reason tells me, that no cheaper remedy could have been provided for fallen creatures than the Redeemer's obeying and dying in their stead.

I confess, young lady, said he, that you have confuted me; but I am not convinced. For I have many times wished, and even prayed, that if I did wrong in rejecting Jesus of Nazareth, God would strike me with some heavy judgment, that I might be convinced of my crime, though

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I paid ever so dearly for it; but no judgment has been inflicted upon me

An atheist, Sir, replied I, might argue in a similar manner, and might say, If there be a God, why does he not avenge himself upon me, seeing I deny his existence? I will give the same answer to you which I should give to him. You must surely think yourself a person of considerable consequence, to suppose that the Creator of the world will go out of his way, to inflict a judgment upon you whenever you please to call for it. Be assured, Sir, that God will proceed in his own way, and that at a proper time he will call you to an account, although for the present he exercise forbearance towards you, and notwithstanding you abuse that forbearance to your greater destruction.

My friend, cried Mr. Barnwell, (looking at Mr. Clifford,) you may as well be silent. When did you ever know a woman at a loss for words? I mind all that has been said just as much as I should a presbyterian sermon. And you, Miss Neville, had better spare your breath. If you think to make a convert of this gentleman, you will find yourself egregiously disappointed. He is a very honest man already; and I do not know what he can be more.

These ladies, said Mr. Clifford, are very able considering their years, to defend their sentiments: but I believe, friend Barnwell, it is too late in the day for you and me to think of altering for the better. However, ladies, I humbly thank you for the agreeable conversation you have been the occasion of.

Since I wrote the above, Mr. Pink and his daughters have drank tea here. Miss Pink, I could perceive, watched every opportunity to say something smart; and, to do her justice, she does not want that kind of wit which qualifies a person for shining in company. Your niece has since told me, that she once thought this character to be the summit of excellence, and imagined she had some pretensions to it herself. But, added she, I desire to va-

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lue nothing now but as it contributes to promote the divine glory, and my own everlasting felicity.

Miss Barnwell and I, in dressing our heads, had not scrupulously adhered to the mode. I do not think it right to aim at singularity: at the same time I never intend to be a slave to fashion, especially so absurd a one as that of enlarging the head to twice its natural size.

Miss Pink could not avoid showing her wit at our expense. Once she asked if we had escaped out of some nunnery; at another time, if we intended to lead the fashion. But, cried she archly, though you have lowered your top-sails, ladies, you will find it a difficult matter to move contrary to the wind.

I replied, that if we did not move contrary to the course of this world, we should be in danger of a greater shipwreck than she perhaps was aware of.

Whatever became of her, she said, she should like a good deal of company.

You have nothing to do then, replied I, but to keep straight forward in the path you seem to have taken.

My stay here, if God permit, will be eight or nine days more; in which time I hope to be favoured with a letter from my friend.

Dear Madam,

I am, with great esteem,

Your very humble servant,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XVIII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR MISS NEVILLE,

YOUR letters came to hand, as did also those of my niece. I have, I thank God, been pretty well; but the loss which I have so unexpectedly sustained has fluttered

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my spirits, and rather indisposed me for writing, which is the only reason you have not heard from me before.

My dear children, I have been reading again your five letters, and wish to say a great deal in answer; but I cannot write a long letter at present. Let me not omit, however, to tell my dear niece, that the person her father has pointed out to her for a husband, notwithstanding his riches, is by no means qualified for that relation; and that I am glad to find she has given him such a peremptory denial. If indeed what either of you said has had a good effect on him, as his father has intimated, there is no doubt but she will have his company again: if not, she is better without him. There are many instances where God makes such persons monuments of his mercy; but, generally speaking, I believe the most High chooses the vessels he intends for his heavenly temple from the families of his servants. When he acts differently, there is singular reason to adore his goodness; and I have observed, that such persons, generally speaking, have a deeper sense of his distinguishing mercy than others. This was remarkably the case with the apostle Paul; who, though religiously educated, yet, on account of his having persecuted Christ in his members, was ever after filled with self-abasement. That abiding sense which he had of God's electing love is conspicuous in almost every page of his writings.

To take irreligious husbands or wives, and trust to what God may afterwards do, is highly presumptuous. The world, our own innate depravity, and the wicked spirit, will be continually hindering us in our pilgrimage to the heavenly Canaan: and be assured, my dear friend, we shall all find in the way difficulties sufficiently numerous, without adding to their number by our imprudence. Besides, if we are sincere in our prayers, that God would deliver us from temptations, or trials, we shall endeavour to avoid them as much as lies in our power.

In the choice of our occupations, of our acquaintance, of the place where we worship God, and especially of so near a friend as a husband, it should be our earnest desire

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that God may be glorified, which he will be if the good of our own souls is promoted. No part of our conduct in relation to these things ought to be passed over with inattention. It becomes us to honour God respecting our time, our houses, our furniture, our dress, our food, and our expenses of every kind. My children, there are no little sins: the least can only be expiated by the blood of Christ. We can be at no loss how to act in every station of life, if we are willing to regulate our conduct by God's word. I am pleased with your telling me in what manner you dress your heads. Let the world laugh on. The holy Spirit has not neglected to inform us in what manner women professing godliness ought to adorn themselves. *Whose adorning*, says the apostle Peter, *let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, or of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.* This ornament is not only valuable in the sight of God, but it will make us far more esteemed by our fellow-mortals than that levity in dress which characterizes the women of the present day. When I say esteemed by our fellow-mortals, I mean the wise and valuable part of them, whose good opinion alone can be an honour to us. With regard to the world, let us do nothing intentionally to offend them: at the same time I would not go one step out of my road to heaven to oblige them.

I am pleased with the easy, yet effectual method which you took to silence the clamours of infidelity. Mr. Clifford thought the wicked lives of pretended Christians an unanswerable objection against Christianity itself; not considering that none are in reality Christians, but they who walk in measure as Christ walked. The argument taken from the harmony among the different nations and sects of pagans (which Mr. Clifford told you was so great as even to extend to the worshipping of each other's gods) only proves that they were all under the dominion of Satan, and that his kingdom was not divided against itself. When

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she arose among them who taught the unity of the divine Being, and the immortality of the soul, which spark of light he most probably had struck from divine revelation, we find them not so complaisant to him. The inoffensive Socrates is first held up to ridicule by Aristophanes, (the Foote of Athens,) and then condemned to death by his fellow-citizens, for teaching what our modern deists would persuade us the light of nature teaches every man. Some of the heathens, indeed, were less addicted to vice than others; but the best of them were very wicked, and the worst were bad beyond all description. Thousands of gladiators were slain in their public shows; and they also beheld with pleasure their fellow-creatures engaged in combat with lions and tigers, to make them sport, though it was done always at the extreme hazard, and frequently with the loss of their lives. Time, indeed, would fail me were I to enumerate one half of the crimes commonly practised by those who, either through their own impiety, or that of their ancestors, had lost the knowledge of the true God.

Infidels very frequently, and very ignorantly, ask—What is the difference whether we worship the supreme Being under the name of Jupiter or Jehovah, or any other appellation which different ages and nations may have thought fit to adopt? They seem not to know that the Gentiles attributed such characters to their gods, and worshipped them with such rites, as are shocking to humanity. By some the grossest obscenities were practised; others, devesting themselves of that tenderness which the brute creation show to their young, sacrificed their children to Saturn, inclosing them in a brazen statue, and causing them to perish in the midst of the fire. They who prefer, or even equal any other religion to Christianity, either betray their own ignorance, or manifest that Satan has filled their minds with so much malevolence against its author, who is love itself, that they quarrel with the sunshine, and take pains to shut out the light.

The religion of Jesus Christ contains the most excel-

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lent system of morality that ever appeared. Where it has had its due influence on the minds of men, it has caused them to be a blessing to every society and family to which they belonged: and, through the providence of God, in those countries which are called Christian, the very fear that after all it might prove true has been such a restraint upon the inhabitants, that they have dreaded to run into those excesses they would have otherwise committed: so that Christianity, in every view of it, has been greatly instrumental in both the civilization and reformation of mankind. And I am persuaded that mere nominal Christians would not suffer by an impartial comparison with pagans and Mahometans; those of them perhaps excepted who have made a trade of religion, and have used it as a steppingstone to wealth and power. These are the men who are chiefly answerable for all the cruelties and murders which have been perpetrated in the name of the Prince of Peace, and (as they would insinuate) in support of his authority. The scandalous lives of such persons have been a bar to the reformation of mankind, and the principal medium by which infidels have thrown an odium upon our most excellent religion.

I quite approve of the arguments made use of by my niece against Mr. Law. He could say very little in behalf of his national church: and indeed where truth is not on our side, our arguments naturally move on very slowly. But I dare say he will console himself with the consideration, that his income has not been lessened by any thing which has been said. That gentleman, speaking to me once about my being a dissenter, remarked, that if he were in France he should choose to conform to the national religion: for undoubtedly, added he, the church of Rome is the mother church. I must not, however, omit, that he said he did not approve of transubstantiation, and a few other things. Indeed it is my opinion that if popery were to be established by act of parliament, the great majority of both priests and people would go back very tractably to Rome: for those who have been brought to bow toward

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the east, and at the name of Jesus; to kneel before what is called the altar; and to suppose that days set apart by fallible men are holy on that account; might with little trouble be made very good catholics.

I have reserved to the last the consideration of Mr. Barnwell's intended marriage, because I thought it possible that I might otherwise fill my paper with that disagreeable subject. Such unnatural marriages are generally unhappy. He cannot suppose that Miss Pink would have him if she had a fortune. It cannot be doubted that her views are mercenary. But it will be in vain for my niece to say any thing to her father: he will not bear contradiction. I fear she will have but little comfort at home after her father is married. It is evident he only wants her to be married, in order that his house may be more at liberty to receive his new wife. Well, she will be welcome to live with me. The little I have left, with economy and a thankful heart, is sufficient to make us very comfortable. Instead of thinking with dissatisfaction, that there are others in more exalted stations, it becomes us to consider how many millions there are in a much worse condition than ourselves. Numberless are the calamities from which, through the kind providence of God, we are exempted. How many do we see with emaciated constitutions, or in want of the necessaries of life, or blind, or lame! Sometimes a variety of evils afflict the same person. How many also in affluent circumstances are suffering from drunken, cruel, or unchaste husbands; or from equally bad wives; or undutiful children; or from their own ignorance of God, and of eternal life by Jesus Christ, which, though they feel it not, is worse than all the other calamities put together! As Christians, therefore, we never can be in such circumstances in this world as to have reason to complain.

With regard to you, my dear child, I advise you to do as you intend. I have no doubt but your father will be exceedingly exasperated: it becomes us, however, at all times, to do that which is right, and to leave the event

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with God. If I can be of any assistance to you, nothing shall be wanting that I can perform. It is not impossible that you may be utterly rejected and abandoned by your parent: in such case you are welcome to partake with me of my pittance. Remember, my dear friend, how many thousands have suffered the loss of their goods, of their liberty, and even of their lives, rather than make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

I shall direct this letter to you; but my dear niece must consider it as equally intended for her. My prayers are continually offered up for you both, that the Shepherd of Israel may watch over you for good.

I am, my dear young friend,
Yours very sincerely,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XIX.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

My father sent a single horse chair for me three days before the time appointed for my return. This alarmed me, and not without reason. The time, however, I have long wished for is at length arrived: and although I am in much trouble, yet I have reason to bless God who comforteth me in all my affliction; and I have reason to say, with all the children of God who have suffered in his cause, that as the sufferings of Christ abound in me, so my consolation also aboundeth by Christ. The Christian may rest assured, that there is an infinite difference between being corrected for his faults, and his suffering for a good conscience. Alas, what are all the reproaches and revilings of his fellow-mortals, to one who is rejoicing in God through our Lord Jesus Christ? Such a one is a brazen

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wall, upon which the artillery of hell can make very little impression. I now know, my dear friend, experimentally what caused Paul and Silas to sing praises to God at midnight, while their feet were fastened in the stocks. It is true I have not literally been used like these holy men; but my name is cast out as evil, and I am looked upon as more vile than the reptile that crawls on the earth; and by those too whom I affectionately loved, and whom I still love, and pray for daily and hourly.

When I arrived in the court, I saw my father look through the window. Always before, if I had been out but for a day, he would hasten to meet me, with a transport of joy; but now no person came, though I stayed sometime taking my things out of the chaise. I foreboded the reason, yet could not conceive how it could be known that I was a protestant, except Mr. Barnwell had sent my father a letter, which I now began to think must have been the case. I trembled from head to foot, and with difficulty reached the parlour. I sat down; but nobody was there, which astonished me beyond measure.

You must know, Madam, that copies of my letters to you and Miss Barnwell, together with your letters to me, were bundled together, and hidden in the drawer of an old table which stood in the lumber-garret. My father, accompanied by signior Albino, entered the parlour with this bundle in his hand. I saw wrath in his countenance; and human nature, unable to sustain the shock, sank beneath the impending stroke. I attempted to get up: that is all I remember. One of the servants tells me that I fell all along on the floor; and indeed my face is much bruised, as well as my arms and one of my elbows.

If I had thus gone out of the world, how easy had been the passage! Those words of our Lord have occurred to my mind with much pleasure, *Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.* The separation of soul and body is not worthy the name of death. The children of God cease to breathe; but they do not cease to live. Life? what is it! The favour of God. And death? It is his displeasure. That death is terrible indeed!

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Father Albino attempted to bleed me, but in vain. He gave it as his opinion that I was dead. My dear parent shed floods of tears, and declared that he could not survive me.

The first thing I can remember is, that I looked up, and saw a number of people about me, some holding a bottle to my nose, and others rubbing me. I could not imagine at first where I was, or what had been the matter. The first face I noticed was that of my dear father, bathed in tears. I put out my hand, and took hold of one of his, and with both mine pressed it to my lips. O Madam, there never was such a father! My dear child, cried he, how happy am I to see thee alive: all, I trust, will yet be well. I beg, Sir, said father Albino, you will not mention a word. O my dear father, said I, still pressing his hand to my lips, may God bless you, and my dear sister, (I saw her weeping,) and my dear brother: then should I die in peace. Father Albino desired I would not talk. I again found myself very ill, and requested to go to bed. There, instead of sleeping, I reflected on the divine goodness, which had hitherto preserved me. I thanked God that it was known by my friends that I was a protestant, and earnestly prayed that I might not be ashamed of him or of his cause. I also recollected, that, in Rev. xxi. 8, the fearful are numbered with the unbelieving, the abominable, and murderers. And certainly, to fear man, who can only kill the body, more than God, is a proof of unregeneracy.

While I was thus meditating, I heard somebody approach softly toward my bed. I looked up, and saw my sister. She kindly asked whether I found myself better. I told her I was a little revived. O my dear Eusebia, said she, what have you done? You have made the happiest family in the world the most unhappy.

My dear Maria, answered I, my fellow-mortals may condemn me; but my God will justify me.

What then, cried she, hastily, is it not true that you are a heretic?

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I acknowledge, replied I, in the words of the Apostle Paul, that after the way which you call heresy, so worship I, if not the God of my fathers, yet the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And do you not remember, said she, what we have often declared to our dear father, that if we should ever become heretics, we desired no favour? Have we not assured him, that we should consider our guilt to be as great as that of Cain, and that we should expect an equal punishment?

I can only say, my dear sister, replied I, that it is a vain thing for worms like us to say what they will do, or what they will be. I then spake sincerely: and I should have acted very imprudently, when I embraced my present sentiments, if I had not been prepared to suffer, as well as to do the whole will of God.

So then, cried she tauntingly, it seems you are determined to go on with your show.

I am determined, with God's assistance, answered I, to be obedient to him, so far as I understand his will. But if any person can convince me out of the Scriptures that I err, I trust I shall alway preserve a teachable mind.

The Scriptures! The Scriptures! forsooth, cried she; I find you are like all the heretics. And pray who is to judge of the meaning of the Scriptures? Yourself, undoubtedly.

Nay, my dear sister, said I, I would allow you to be judge, if the state of your mind resembled that of the writers of them; and without that state of mind, no one can be a proper judge.

I thought I heard something move, and turning my head, perceived my dear father standing just within the room. When he was aware that I saw him, he came forward, and said in the kindest manner, How does my dear angel do? I hope she is a little better. I thanked him, holding out my hand to take hold of his. O my dear father, said I, you think me culpable; and yet you are kind to me: your goodness overcomes me.

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He sat down by my bed-side, and, holding my hand, said, I have indeed had too much reason for it: but I know the sweetness of your disposition, my own Eusebia, and am persuaded that the sense you have always had of your duty to God, to his church, and to your parent, will be more than sufficient to make you return to the true religion. It was a kind providence that your sister found your letters: you might otherwise have continued longer in your wandering from the fold of Christ, and have been thereby hardened in your apostacy. Many sheep have strayed from the right ways of God, and yet been brought back again. Father Albino has wept as if you had been his own child. The tenderness with which he loved you, and with which we all loved you, is inexpressible. The venerable man declares, that his own soul is not dearer to him than the souls of his three children; but that his Eusebia was the last he should have suspected of falling into heresy.

I desire no favour, Sir, replied I, if I am guilty of heresy. A heretic I humbly conceive, is one who departs from the truth delivered by the holy Spirit through the medium of the apostles and prophets. I cannot be a heretic; for I reject no article of divine truth.

I have not read the letters, said my father, which have passed between you and your friends. But your sister and father Albino, who have read several of them, declare that you are as great a heretic as Luther and Calvin.

That is possible, Sir, replied I; and yet I may be no heretic after all. We ought not to judge according to notions, which we have embraced merely because our ancestors held them; but we ought to judge righteous judgment. It grieves me to the heart, my dear father, to hear you give that name to persons who stand in the divine presence. To speak against the servants of Jesus, is to speak against him.

My father and sister seemed astonished beyond measure. My child, cried my father, you amaze me. I should as soon believe that Satan and all his angels were

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in heaven, as those two arch-heretics. Were not those emissaries of the wicked one the means of rending the seamless coat of Christ? And what has been the consequence? Just what might have been expected. Those who left the holy catholic apostolic church have received the just reward of their iniquity, in the divisions and subdivisions into which they have been crumbling from that time to this. O my love, (taking hold of my hand,) you need only look at the lives of those who are divided from us, in order to know what kind of reformation that of Luther and Calvin was.

I acknowledge, my dear father, replied I, that protestants in general appear to be destitute of the fear of God: but that is no proof that all protestants are so. As to their being called by different names, I look upon that to be no evil at all, any more than that the seven churches of Asia were called by different names. It does not follow, because different societies of Christians are unconnected with each other, that therefore the church of God is divided. If Christians adhere to divine truth, though they be scattered in a hundred different countries, they are all one in Christ Jesus: and, on the contrary, if they have departed from it, they are not the churches of Christ, however they may be united.

Churches of Christ, child? cried my father; there can be but one church of Christ. Does not the spouse in the Canticles say, *My dove, my undefiled is but one?* And is not the church this one church, termed by the apostle St. Paul, *the pillar and ground of the truth?* Now if any church except the holy Roman church, can lay claim to these characters, tell me which of the numberless sects and parties it is?

I bless God, and I thank you, Sir, said I, that you will hear your child. In answer to what you have said, I acknowledge that the church of Christ is one church, and that this church is called the pillar and ground of the truth. It is so called, because every member of it both supports the truth, and is built upon it. But if it be asked, whether

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the church of Rome, of England, or of Geneva, is this church, I answer, None of them. If it be further asked, whether any particular congregation of protestant dissenters is this church, I must still answer, No. The one universal church is composed of all the saints who are now in heaven, and of all the friends of Christ who are now on earth, wherever they are scattered, or by whatever name known. To suppose there is a visible church, consisting of a great number of congregations united under one visible head, is the foundation of almost every error in the church of Rome; and no protestant church that follows the church of Rome in this particular, is a church of Christ.

I am amazed at your confidence, Eusebia, cried my father angrily: this is telling me that the church of Rome is not the church of Christ, although she has stood the test of more than seventeen hundred years, while a hundred sects and parties have risen up, and made a noise for a while, which are now sunk into oblivion. The church of Rome was famous, even in the time of the Apostles: her faith was then spoken of throughout the whole world, as St. Paul himself testified. You deny that the visible church is composed of many congregations under one visible head. But was not this the case with the Jews under Aaron, and the high priests his successors? And was it not also the same with the churches under the Apostles, and especially under St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and his successors the bishops of Rome?

With respect to the Jews, Sir, answered I, they were considered as one church, because in fact they were but one congregation. The high priest was a type of Christ, and is so declared to have been in the epistle to the Hebrews. As he was the head of the Jewish church, so Jesus Christ is the only head of his church and people, and they are all brethren, and upon a level with each other. If there be any preferment in Christ's church, it runs counter to preferment in the world; since he who is greatest in his kingdom has, like his divine master, no

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other privilege than that of being servant to all the rest. That Peter was the prince of the Apostles, my dear father, I cannot believe, except I have some sufficient proof of it: and even that proof, if it could be produced, would be of no advantage to your cause, unless it could be also proved that the apostles had successors. Our Lord chose twelve men to be witnesses of what he did and taught, whom he sent into the world for that purpose; on which account, as you well know, they were called Apostles. When one of these had become a traitor, as the Scripture had foretold he would, they chose another, in obedience to the Scripture, to fill up his place, from those who had been with them from the beginning. The last person appointed to that office was Paul: but his apostleship was not of men, neither by any authority which he received from man, but was immediately conferred upon him by Jesus Christ, and by God the Father, who raised him from the dead. It is indeed impossible to conceive how the apostles should have any successors, if we consider what they were commissioned to do. The Holy Spirit was to bring to their remembrance all that they had seen and heard, in order that they might bear testimony to the truth wherever they went: and they were to take care that the same things were committed to writing, that the churches might have them in remembrance after their decease. Those very apostles, therefore, who saw Christ in the flesh, continue to be God's ambassadors to the churches, in their writings, to this moment, and will be so to the end of time. The bishop of Rome, indeed, pretends to have the power of binding and loosing, of absolving from sin, and of anathematizing, in which he is imitated by many who call themselves protestants. But men are only justified or condemned now by what the apostles continue to say in their writings. It is thus they continue to remit and to retain sins; and they have not delegated their authority to any one. And, indeed, my dear father, if the writings of those apostles who saw our Saviour personally, contain my sentiments, and justify my conduct, though all the

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popes of Rome that ever existed should curse me, I would disregard it; for I have the fullest conviction that the bishop of Rome, who has usurped the authority of God, and who sits in his temple as if he himself were God, is no other than the great head of mystical Babylon, and that it is the duty of Christians to depart out of that city, which is devoted to everlasting destruction.

My sister was red with fury, and said that my breath was pestilential, and that I deserved the most cruel of all deaths for the blasphemies which I had uttered against the vicar of Christ. My father was moved both with grief and anger. Eusebia, cried he, contrary to the duty which you owed to me, to yourself, and, above all, to the holy church of Rome, you have kept company with heretics, and have read heretical books; and, not having the fear of God before your eyes, you have apostatized from the holy universal church, and are wandering you know not whither. This church, however, like a true and tender mother, is ready to receive returning sinners; and I have yet hope concerning you, that, like the prodigal who wandered from his father's house, you may yet be induced to bethink yourself, and to ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and to walk therein, that you may find rest to your soul. Consider, Eusebia, consider, my child, for so I would still wish to call you, whither these new-fangled opinions will lead you. What! Had Christ no church before the time of those arch-heretics Luther and Calvin? Fy upon you, Eusebia; you have sadly made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and that at a time when I thought you proof against any of those impostors who lie in wait to deceive the unwary. Come, child, (turning to my sister,) let us leave her to her own reflections, which I should imagine must be more severe than any thing we can say.

You will easily believe, Madam, that I had but little sleep that night. Indeed I was so ill, that I did not rise till the afternoon of the next day. My sister was sent by my father several times to see how I did, and every visit was accompanied with some ill-natured reflection: but I

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would not enter into conversation, having had sufficient experience that what I said was not attended to. Those persons who entertain no doubt of the goodness of their cause, are apt to pay too little attention to the arguments of their opponents.

This is the fourth day since I came from Barnwell; and as I have spent the chief of my time in my study, I have had an opportunity of writing which I thought it would be inexcusable to neglect. My dear Mrs. Worthington's letters to me must be inclosed in those to her niece, who will seal them, and send them to Thomas Livingstone's. I was a few minutes last night at that good man's house. He encourages me to endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. I pray that the divine Being will enable me to persevere.

Dear Madam,

I am your sincere friend,

And very humble servant,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XX.

From Mr. Charles Clifford to Miss Eusebia Neville.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE destroyed two letters which I had written to you; and should I write this and ten more, it is possible I should not please myself. The sum of what I have to relate is this:

When I was with you and Miss Barnwell. I did not disguise my sentiments. I had long ago imbibed prejudices against a religion, which, thanks be to God, I am now convinced is worthy of him who gave me my being. I know it is from God. I have read the New Testament, and compared it with the Old, and have found that they have every internal mark of being dictated by the Spirit of truth. Like

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two parts of an indenture, they exactly correspond. The writers breathe the same spirit, and have one design, namely, the glory of God in the salvation of sinners. How unwise have I been in making an estimate of a religion, so holy, and so well calculated to make those who receive it happy, from the lives of those who are destitute of its spirit, and ignorant of its design.

Having blessed God for his mercy exercised toward me, permit me, dear Madam, to thank you for the goodness you manifested in endeavouring to bring me to a right mind. A divine blessing attended what you said. I have returned to an insulted God, whom I found to be more ready to give than I was to ask, and have experienced great peace and joy in prostrating my soul before him.

I entreat you to give me credit when I tell you, that I am no longer the same Charles Clifford I was. When you conversed with me, I resembled a person at sea without a compass, sailing he knows not whither. I possessed knowledge enough, derived from divine revelation, to render me miserable, and therefore attempted to extinguish the glorious luminary from which that light proceeded.

My father, who has been in your company since I had that pleasure, speaks greatly in your praise. I pray that what you have said to him may have a happy effect.

I know that your friends are strict Roman catholics: but when I conversed with you, I was convinced that this was not your case: and my father has since confirmed it. He tells me that it is but very lately that you have left the Romish church, and that he does not know whether your friends are yet acquainted with it.

I lament my folly and guilt in taking it for granted, after beholding the absurdities and abominations to be found in popish countries, especially among the clergy, that the Christian religion was a fable invented by legislators and priests. I now perceive that worldly men, under a clerical habit, not only among catholics, but among protestants, have impiously turned a religion of divine origin into an instrument for awing and plundering the ignorant mul-

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titude. How remote are their ostentatious places of worship, their pompous ceremonies, and their princely dignities, from the writings and the practice of the apostles! When a thinking person beholds at Rome, altars smoking with incense, and the pope, the cardinals, and the bishops, clothed in their magnificent pontificals, rioting in luxury and idleness, and supported by the labour of the miserable laity, it is scarcely possible to avoid despising and abhorring the Christian religion; unless, indeed, the person who beholds those enormities be wise enough to consider, that there are no more Christians than there are followers of the faith and practice of Jesus and his humble disciples. To confound the religion of an antichristian clergy with Christianity is a fatal absurdity; and yet how many millions, falling into this gulf of error, sink into everlasting perdition!

My dear Miss Neville, I should add something more; but my hand will scarcely hold my pen. You are acquainted with my having made proposals to Miss Barnwell, which she prudently rejected. I had not then conversed with Eusebia Neville. I do not know how to speak to her upon such a subject, because I fear I have not fortitude enough to receive a denial; nor do I desire a union with her, unless it shall please God to preserve me in the faith. I have too great a regard for her to wish her to be united to an infidel.

I forward this from Holyhead, as I am about to embark for Ireland, where my stay is uncertain. I hope it will not be long. In the meantime believe me to be, with the greatest regard,

Dear Madam,
Your sincere friend,
And most obedient servant,
CHARLES CLIFFORD.

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LETTER XXI.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE given you an account of my conversation with my father and sister. Since that time my father has gone to London, and I do not expect him to return in less time than eight or ten days. When he left me, he said with a determined tone, Eusebia, remember that, although I may bear long with you, my patience is not infinite. I shall leave this venerable man (looking toward father Albino) to be your spiritual director: and observe, I shall expect to see you reconciled to our holy church at my return; otherwise, take notice, it will be at your peril.

My dear father, replied I, to make you happy, I could willingly lay down my life. Then, falling on my knees, and taking hold of one of his hands, I earnestly besought him not to desire my everlasting destruction.

Destruction? cried he, lifting me up; God forbid! If it were not that I earnestly desire your everlasting happiness above every other consideration, I should not give myself this trouble. Let common sense judge, whether all the learned doctors of our church, and father Albino, not to mention myself, are not likely to understand things better than you who are a child? Let every one move in his proper sphere. It is your duty and mine to believe implicitly as we are taught by our superiors: in acting thus we shall be safe. If we were to believe nothing but what is agreeable to our weak capacities, every one would have a creed of his own. What would then become of uniformity; and how could Christians be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment!

Indeed, Sir, replied I, what you have said is not unanswerable.

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I will hear nothing, said he, in behalf of heresy. If you have any scruples, mention them to father Albino or your sister: but when they have answered your doubts, that ought to suffice.

My father left me very unkindly. He bade me farewell coldly, without embracing me. I had not been used to such treatment. I went up to my closet and entreated the interposition of the Almighty.

I know in some measure whence this unkind usage proceeds. Father Albino is what may be called a very friendly, kind man, where religion is not concerned, and has a real esteem for our family; but my being a heretic is an offence not to be forgiven. One of our maids, who, I believe, really sympathizes with me in my distress, tells me that she repeatedly heard him say to my father, that if fair means would not do, severity ought to be used. How far God may permit them to carry that severity, is known only to him, but I am well persuaded, that even the wrath of man shall be so overruled by his providence as to contribute to his glory, and that the remainder of it he by his almighty power will restrain. O my dear friend, how happy should we be, if we always lived in the enjoyment of a perfect assurance that our God is the sovereign of the universe; that every creature, animate and inanimate, is obedient to his will; and that his worst enemies have always, though unintentionally, promoted his gracious designs of mercy to his people.

This morning I received a letter which surprised me, from Mr. Charles Clifford. He endeavours to deter me from returning to the church of Rome, of which he has drawn a frightful picture, but I believe a tolerable likeness.

I have great hope that the conversation I had with him at Mr. Barnwell's has been a mean of convincing him of the truth. Time only can discover whether the seed is sown on good ground, or only by the way-side, or among thorns. He seems fearful lest he should be left to return to his former deism, which is a good sign. We cannot trust in ourselves too little.

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I was in my study when it came. My sister, therefore, took it in, and she and father Albino brought it up to me. My child, cried the father, a letter is come by the post, directed for you; but your father charged me to let you receive no heretical letters, unless I saw them, in order that I might, by my counsel, prevent any evil impressions.

Sir, said I, it is in your possession, and you are welcome to keep it, as I am at a loss to know who should write to me.

O no, he said, he only desired to see it after I had read it. This I promised: but we often desire things to our hurt. When you have read it, Madam, you will not wonder that the contents enraged both him and my sister. This Clifford was the vilest heretic in the world, and deserved to be burned at a stake; and I ought to keep him company.

Indeed, my dear sister, cried I, you are opposing God. The apostles did not teach the religion of Jesus in this manner.

You do not consider, said father Albino, that they had no power to enforce obedience to the laws of Christ till the time of the blessed emperor Constantine, when the alliance took place between the church and the state.

That alliance, father, replied I, was injurious to the church. Christians might have erred in doctrine and practice, if there had been no religious establishment, but not in so great a degree as those have done, who, armed with the civil power, have turned the noblest panacea into a poison, and the greatest blessing into a curse.

I am of a different opinion, said he; and experience proves, that Christianity has never flourished where it has not been enforced by the sword of the magistrate. I intreat you, my dear child, to return to the bosom of the church. We wish to treat you in the tenderest manner. The church of Rome has never used severity until every other method has been tried without success. I find you have been reading that arch-heretic Fox. I appeal to yourself, whether the greatest lenity was not used toward

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those stubborn apostates. If they would have renounced their heresies, even after they were fastened to the stake, their lives would have been spared. You know this to be true. Besides, very few comparatively were put to the torture in England. In France, and other parts of Christendom, heretics were not treated with such lenity; and we see the happy effects.

My dear Sir, replied I, it gives me concern to see you and my sister bent upon your own destruction. Pray consider, that it was foretold in the Revelation, that an antichristian church would arise in the world under the Christian name, and that he who presided in it would usurp the divine authority, and act as if he were God. This church is represented as riding upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy: and to pass by many other of her characters, such as her riches, pride, and abominations, she is characterised as bearing a resemblance to ancient Babylon, that terrible scourge to the people of God. The words MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, were written on her forehead. And, lest any one should mistake, she is described as drunken with the blood of the saints, and of the martyrs of Jesus. Now, my dear friends, let me entreat you to inquire whether you are not members of that society, so awfully described in many parts of Scripture, but especially in the 17th and 18th chapters of the Revelation. It is a debt which you owe to yourselves; for if you should neglect my advice, and perish with that miserable company, it will be but a small alleviation of your misery to say, that you could never have thought it.

Poor wretch! cried my sister, dost thou imagine that thou canst instruct father Albino?

My dear child, said he, we have charitably endeavoured to instruct this poor conceited girl, who, if you will believe her, understands things better than you or I, or indeed the greatest doctors in our church. If you had one dram of humility left, (addressing me) you would submit to be instructed by those who are much your superiors in knowledge of every kind.

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I held my peace, perceiving that what I said was disregarded. I am not anxious to know how these things will terminate, but commit myself to the protection of my heavenly Parent, who is able to do for me more than I can ask or think.

Miss Barnwell is now with me in my study. She has brought the melancholy news of her father's being married this morning to Miss Pink. As soon as the ceremony was performed, Mr. Barnwell and his wife, and Mr. Pink and his two other daughters, set off on a visit to Mr. Pink's brother, an attorney, who lives about twenty miles distant. My dear Miranda tells me she was asked very coldly to accompany them, which she declined, by telling her father, if he was willing, she would go to Thornton, to which he readily consented. She did not know that my father was from home, and only intended to go to our friend Livingstone's to inquire after me; but my sister accidentally met her as she was entering the village, and good manners supplied the place of affection, and procured me the pleasure of my friend's company.

Miss Barnwell, Madam, has had no heart to write to you lately. She could only make you sorrowful by her complaints. Her father scarcely ever speaks peaceably to her. He tells her he shall never forgive her refusal of Mr. Clifford; that if he should have a young family, he will have very little to give her; and if he had, that he would never bestow it on a presbyterian parson, and no other husband, he supposes, will please her. A continual round of reflections of this kind is her daily portion, which makes her long, she says, to arrive at those happy regions, where God will wipe the tears from the eyes of his people.

I showed my dear friend the letter sent to me by Mr. Clifford, and told her I thought it very unhappy that she had given him such a positive denial, as I entertained favourable hopes of his becoming a Christian. I am not sorry, replied she. I did what was my duty at that time, and in those circumstances. My God has the direction of all events; and I am certain that I shall not be a sufferer

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for doing that which I knew to be his will. And with regard to you, my dear friend, I would advise you not to venture upon that gentleman, until you shall have satisfactory proof of his being a servant of God. If that should ever be the happy case, I entreat you not to refuse him on my account. I replied, that I hoped no consideration would induce me to accept of any person for a husband, who I had the least reason to think was not a Christian.

I cannot add any thing more, except that your niece desires her duty to you, and that I continue, dear Madam,

Your sincere friend,

And very humble servant,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XXII.

From Miss Miranda Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

MY DEAR AUNT,

WHEN we consider the troubles and disquietudes of life, what reason we have to bless our God and Father, that he has made our days but as a hand-breadth, and that our continuance in this porch of our existence is comparatively as nothing before him. With regard to myself, my happiness would have almost vanished, had it not been that I can go to a throne of grace, and, through the mediation of my Saviour, receive those inestimable blessings, peace of conscience, contentment with my lot, and an assurance that I shall be safely conducted to the regions of immortality.

Eusebia has informed you, Madam, that my father is married, and that I have been at the Abbey.

Miss Neville and father Albino behaved with civility to me the few hours I was there, and even desired me to stay, but as I had seen my dear friend, I thought it best not to give any unnecessary offence to her father, who will, undoubtedly, be informed of my having been there.

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I saw Thomas and his wife, who are well, and desire their respects to their benefactress. They reside in a neat little thatched cottage with two rooms on a floor. I do not think I ever saw any persons equally happy. They live chiefly on barley bread and milk; which, where there is a good appetite, and a stomach undepraved by luxury, is an excellent food. I liked their house better than our own. A dwelling which has twenty times more room than we can occupy, seems to me to be of no more use than a grave twenty times too large for our coffin: nay, I think a great house a great evil; because, like every other advantage, real or imaginary, it is apt to produce pride, and to make us think of ourselves above what we ought to think. My station is likely to be very low in this life; but if my God bring my mind to a level with my condition, it is all that I desire. I trust he is daily teaching me not to envy the prosperous state of the wicked, nor to imagine that any are happy but those who are interested in his favour.

We have had many visitors to congratulate my father and Mrs. Barnwell on their marriage. How often have I wished to be with our friend Thomas and his wife. My habitual silence will, I suppose, be imputed to discontent. But, in fact, the conversation is generally upon such subjects as are either idle and uninteresting, or sinful.

Miss Louisa Pink is a great talker; and religion now and then comes in for some of her remarks. I find that she and my mother and Mr. Pink are Socinians, or (as they call themselves) Unitarians. When we were at tea this afternoon, I hope, Miss Barnwell, said she, you are not one of those wrong-headed people, who insist upon it that three are one, and that one is three.

The flighty manner in which she said this and other things, made me reply, that such important subjects deserved to be treated with a greater degree of seriousness. I added, that it was my desire to maintain those doctrines only which had been maintained by the prophets and apostles.

Undoubtedly, said Mr. Pink, religious subjects, when-

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ever they are introduced, ought to be treated with seriousness. But I think, Miss Barnwell, your good sense will not admit the notion of a plurality of Gods.

You quite mistake the matter, Sir, interrupted my father; when any one commences a profession of religion, he discards good sense, and even common sense: the greater the absurdity the more meritorious the faith. This girl of mine, before she associated with Presbyterians, was inferior to no one in good sense: but now, for a week together, I do not hear her say an agreeable or sensible thing.

There is enough, Sir, replied Mr. Pink, in the church of England, to find fault with; and Miss Barnwell, I doubt not, is able to assign sufficient reasons for her dissent. As to myself, if there were a dissenting minister of my sentiments in the neighbourhood, I would not go to hear such a farrago of inconsistencies as the Common Prayer. And I think it a great hardship on the clergy, to be obliged to swear that they give their assent and consent to every thing contained in that book: it is to require perjury from the teachers of a divine morality, of which perjury their conscience must accuse them every time they read it. It is true, I go to church; but I never join in those parts of the worship which I think blasphemous.

Indeed, Sir, answered my father, you are more curious than I am. I never gave myself any concern about it; and I dare say ninety-nine out of a hundred of the clergy know as little, and think as little about the matter as I do.

Some conscientious men, Sir, said Mr. Pink, have resigned their preferments in the church, because they would not wound their consciences by reading the Athanasian and Nicene creeds, and many absurd passages in various parts of the service.

I firmly believe, cried my father, that the great body of them regard these things no more than I do: and it is well they do not; for how could they help themselves? The church was as much intended to be a decent provision for the younger branches of the nobility, and gentry, as the

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army and navy. They consider it simply in that light: and if they were commanded to swear before induction, that they believed the tale of Bel and the Dragon, they would not scruple to do it. As long, however, as Sunday is set apart by the state to give a little rest to servants and horses, I would have every one go to his parish church: it would prevent a great deal of drunkenness, as well as hedge-breaking and poaching.

I thought, Sir, said Mr. Pink, that I was not above half a churchman; but you seem to have a worse opinion of the clergy than I have.

By no means, replied my father; they are as honest and learned a body as any in Europe: but they are men; and why should we expect them to possess a nature different from our own? If I had been educated for the church, do you think any one should have invented a creed that would have kept me out of it? Indeed he should not: and the clergy in general are of my mind. The sin lies at the door of those who impose creeds and subscriptions, as I have frequently heard the clergy observe. They are not blameable who are obliged to subscribe them; I say, obliged to subscribe them; for if eating and drinking be necessary, subscription is necessary also.

Surely, Sir, said Mr. Pink, you forget that in the beginning of the reign of Charles II. more than two thousand ministers, rather than declare upon oath their assent and consent to every thing contained in the new service-book, left the church. Indeed, a great number of them, before they had an opportunity of seeing it, were compelled either to take the oath I have mentioned, or to resign their benefices. They chose to do the latter, which proves that there have been conscientious men among the clergy.

If, Sir, replied my father, none could have been found to supply their place, there would have been more force in your argument But how many do you suppose could be persuaded to give up their livings now? Instead of two thousand, I dare say not two of a thousand. The clergy now, like other people, attend to the main chance; and

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they are in the right. Their education gives them the rank of gentlemen: and ought it to be expected that they should give up every thing and become beggars?

And pray, Miss Barnwell, cried Mr. Pink, do *you* think they act rightly in subscribing what they do not believe?

Yes, Sir, replied I, if Christianity is only a fable, invented by legislators and priests for the benefit of the younger branches of the nobility and gentry, which seems to be taken for granted. I acknowledge that there is such a kind of Christianity, which, with its teachers and hearers, has not been badly described.

If you, Madam, said Mr. Pink, had given such a description of the clergy, I should not have wondered: but that Mr. Barnwell, who is so zealous a churchman, should entertain no better an opinion of them, surprises me not a little.

Notwithstanding, Sir, replied I, my sentiments are in favour of a dissent from the church of England, and indeed from every other established church, yet I have a better opinion of a considerable part of her clergy than my father seems to have. I think that many of them entertain no doubt concerning the truth of what they have subscribed; and that many of the rest sigh and groan in secret, because they are obliged continually to countenance doctrines which they suppose to be false.

That is very true, Madam, said Mr. Pink. Really, Mr. Barnwell, continued he, your daughter understands these things well, I assure you.

I wish, replied my father, she understood obedience to her parent. Let her learn that in the first place. But I am sorry to say that this makes no part of her religion.—Thus ended the conversation.

The want of respect from churchmen towards the clergy results from the very nature of a religious establishment. Those two grand bonds of affection are wanting, Free Choice, and Voluntary Support. The primitive Christians chose their pastors, (which practice continued during the three first centuries,) and voluntarily ministered to

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them in temporal things. In the apostolic age there was no priestly domination; but the preachers were gentle among their fellow Christians, even as a nurse cherisheth her children. Their hearers were in their hearts, and they were ready to die and live with them; and they received from their hearers a return of affection. Can such mutual love be expected where the preachers are appointed by law, and paid out of the labours of the people without asking their consent? Ought we to wonder that the hireling, in general, careth not for the flock, and that the flock careth as little for the hireling?

There is a company of strolling players at Warhampton. My father and mother agreed, while they were at breakfast, to go to the play, this being the first night. She used many arguments to induce me to accompany them, and among other things said, that as much might be learned from a good play as from a sermon. I replied, that some sermons were written by the same persons who wrote plays, and that consequently the latter were likely to be as good as the former.

And what disparagement, said she, is that to them?

I replied that plays were unfriendly to the cause of morality.

The abuse of a thing, said she, is no argument against its use. A well-regulated theatre is a great benefit to a country. Why may there not be moral plays, as well as immoral? The book of Job is a dramatic poem, founded upon facts, as many of our plays are.

A well-regulated theatre, Madam, answered I, would soon be deserted. The licentious taste, therefore, of those who frequent the playhouse is consulted by the managers, and by the writers of plays. If four or five persons were to repeat, on the stage, the book of Job, I question if the audience would not grow riotous, and break up the benches, before they had gone through half a dozen chapters.

Well, said she, I shall go: I see no damage in it: and I would have you go too: for no advantage arises from being over precise. Besides, all the genteel people in the neighbourhood will be there to-night.

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It may be so, Madam, replied I: but I hope I shall never deliberately go to a play; nor indeed any where else, except I am first persuaded that the Son of God would go thither if he were upon earth.

Well, Louisa, said my mother, (looking at her sister, and laughing,) we may venture to go. Miss Barnwell has religion enough for herself and us too.

This is the ground I myself have trodden; and I should still have walked in the same path, if God in sovereign mercy had not prevented it. What reason have his servants to adore his distinguishing favour, in saving and calling them with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. I can only add that I am, Dear Madam,

Your dutiful and
Affectionate niece,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XXIII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR NIECE,

I HAVE read your letter with pleasure. Your situation, my dear child, though disagreeable, is not a bad one upon the whole. That cannot be injurious to us which causes us frequently to repair to a throne of grace. Affliction is as necessary for us in the present life, as rainy and frosty weather are necessary to fertilize the earth. As your afflictions lead to God, you may infer that they come from him in a way of love. Their nature and measure, therefore, will be properly adjusted; and as your day is, such also will be your strength.

It is a delightful night. I have been viewing the stars. I cannot without transport behold this profusion of lumi-

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naries, few of which are less than the sun that enlightens our earth and its kindred planets. How great that Being who created those luminaries, and who placed them at such a stupendous distance from us, and from each other! It is He who *bringeth forth Mazzaroth in his season:* it is He who *guideth Arcturus with his sons.* Amid such great affairs, are not our trifling concerns overlooked? No, the hairs of our head are numbered; and we are as much the objects of the care of our infinitely wise, august, and beneficent Creator, as if he had brought us alone into existence. He marked out the bounds of our habitation before we came into being; and he has promised that he will never leave us, nor forsake us. What then should hinder us from being calm and serene in every situation, and in every condition of life?

Mr. C. Clifford's letter gives me great hope concerning him. Poor young man! he comes out of as irreligious a family as any in the kingdom. I once heard his father boast that he had not been in a place of worship during the last twenty years. But as in the house of Jeroboam there was an Abijah, in whom was found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel; so, in the present day, God sometimes takes his servants out of the families of his avowed enemies.

I wish our dear Eusebia not to refuse this gentleman, if he shall appear to be a sincere Christian. This can only be known by his continuing in the doctrine which is according to godliness, and by his bearing such fruit as is produced by those vines which are of God's planting. It affords me pleasure to view the gracious providence of our heavenly Father, who appears to me to be raising him up for a blessing to my friend.

Does there not appear to you in Mr. Clifford's letter an internal proof of his sincerity? I seem to myself to have such a kind of certainty of it, as Delilah had of the sincerity of Samson when he showed her all his heart.

I have been thinking of the difference between a true Christian and a hypocrite. A hypocrite is a religious

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professor destitute of the love of God, and of the spirit of Christ, and who has no love to the truth. He frequently deceives the servants of God; those who are of the truth: but most of all he deceives himself. Christians frequently have doubts concerning him: that, however, is not always the case. Judas had art enough not to be detected for a considerable time. But as a worldly spirit entirely actuates every hypocrite, that spirit, however he may curb it to render himself agreeable to those with whom he associates, will constantly influence him. Because he endeavours to disguise his motives, and to appear what he is not, he is called a hypocrite; that is, an actor or player, whose employment is to appear in the character of others, and not in his own. Great wisdom is required to enable us to judge of our own sincerity, and of the hypocrisy of others; since, in this imperfect state, a Christian is not entirely destitute of hypocrisy, nor a hypocrite of every kind of sincerity. In worldly matters, our own interest demands that we be sincere. A hypocrite, therefore, if he be a prudent man, will, in general, be sincere in his dealings; and a Turk or a Jew will be the same. On the other hand, an imprudent Christian may, through remaining ignorance and temptation, be warped from sincerity in worldly things; but he will suffer severely for it. In this seems to lie the great difference between the one and the other. The Christian is sincere in his love to God, to his law, to his pure gospel, and to sincerity, justice, mercy, and righteousness of every kind. He shudders at the thought of being drawn aside from any of these things, and abhors himself in dust and ashes when he is convinced that this has been the case. Peter wept bitterly when he reflected how deceitfully and unkindly he had behaved respecting his Lord: and we may infer that the same apostle suffered considerable compunction on account of the insincerity and dissimulation for which Paul so kindly and so faithfully reproved him. On the contrary, the hypocrite, or the religious professor destitute of the spirit of Christ, cannot love God as his character is drawn in the Scrip-

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tures. He may love a God; but it is the idol of his own imagination. In like manner, if he love the gospel, it is a corrupted gospel; for not being actuated by the Spirit of Christ, which leads to an entire dependence on Christ, he is necessarily influenced by a spirit of self-dependence. This is the case with every unregenerate man. Nor does he love the law of God, because it is a transcript of the divine mind, infinitely excellent in itself, and agreeable to his own renewed nature; but he yields an unwilling and very partial obedience to it, because he loves himself, and is willing to compound matters with his Maker, and to give him the tithe of mint, anise and cummin. He is willing to sacrifice the blind and lame of his flock, provided he may be permitted to gratify his pride, his covetousness, or his ambition. In a word, he loves the gospel for no other reason than because, through his mistaken view of it, he can sin without remorse; and the law, no further than he thinks that obedience to it secures him against future punishment.

How vain and silly were the arguments of Mrs. Barnwell in behalf of stage entertainments. No arguments against them need to be addressed to the servants of God; for he effectually teaches his children to abhor such principles, and such practices.

I intended to write also to our friend; but upon perusing the above, I perceive that what I have said to you is equally proper to be said to her. I request you, therefore, when you have read it, to send it in a cover to Thomas Livingstone, to whom, as also to his wife, I desire my kind respects

I am, my dear niece,
Your most affectionate aunt,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

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LETTER XXIV.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

MY DEAR AUNT,

I HAVE been to visit Mrs. Law. She was at our house last week, and made me promise to come to see her, for that she had something of importance to say to me. I suspected that she wanted me to return to the church; nor was I mistaken.

Mrs. Law, as you well know, was the daughter of an independent minister. She is of a mild and affable disposition, and is very religious. I believe that what she did was by Mr. Law's desire; for he cannot bear the thought that any of his parishioners should go to meeting.

Mrs. Law began with saying, that she was exceedingly sorry to see my place at church empty; that she believed me to be a well-disposed young lady; and that such ought to stay in the church to benefit others by their example. I, continued she, who was brought up a dissenter, am persuaded that there is nothing in the church of England but what the pious and well-disposed may conscientiously submit to, and that in some things the church is even superior to the meeting. For instance: dissenting ministers are dependant on their hearers for their stipend, poor as it generally is. This is a snare, and tends to warp their judgment, and to make them preach such doctrine as they know will be agreeable to their hearers. Besides, it is really degrading to, and beneath a man who has received a liberal education, and is indeed a gentleman, at least in that respect, to live on the alms of his hearers; for I can call their contributions by no better a name. I have heard my father regret that the terms of communion in the church of England were such as he could not conscientiously submit to as a minister. But this obstacle does

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not lie in the way of private Christians; for they are not called to subscribe to any thing.

There are many dissenters, Madam, replied I, who think with your father that it would be possible to form a national church upon a Scriptural plan: but I must dissent from those disenters. The apostolical churches were assemblies of Christians, separated from the world, and maintaining no religious connexion with it. They were not of the world, even as their Lord and Master was not of the world. And if any unbelievers crept in among them, they were commanded to purge out the old leaven, that they might be a new lump. Churches, therefore, instead of being national, ought to consist of the servants of God, selected out of a nation.

Mrs. Law But if the chief magistrate be a Christian, ought he not to provide able and religious ministers?

Mir. What kind of ministers, Madam, ought he to provide, if he be a Roman Catholic? What kind will he then be likely to provide; or though a protestant, if he be merely a nominal Christian? Or what kind is likely to be provided by that description of men to whom the right of presentation to church livings in general belongs?

Mrs. Law. If the maintenance of the clergy depended upon voluntary subscription, many would sooner part with their Christianity than with their money. It is the opinion of some wise men, that if the interference of government in religious matters were to cease, the Christian religion would be lost, and paganism would again prevail.

Mir. Did not the Christian religion extend itself in three hundred years over the Roman empire, so that the pagan priests complained that their temples were deserted, and that there were none to purchase sacrifices? Is not God still able to protect his own cause? Has he not in every age of the church sent faithful labourers to gather in his harvest?

Mrs. Law. Your objection to the interference of the magistrate in religious matters, appears to me to hold good, only provided he be a Roman catholic, or merely a

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nominal Christian. But provided he be a protestant, and a real Christian, may he not then interfere?

Mir. In what manner?

Mrs. Law. By appointing and supporting Christian ministers.

Mir. Of what denomination?

Mrs. Law. Of his own, certainly.

Mir. And what shall we suppose that to be?

Mrs. Law. You know what denomination of Christians is established in England.

Mir. You do not mean to say, Madam, that a person cannot be a Christian, unless he be a member of the English religious establishment?

Mrs. Law. Certainly not.

Mir. Suppose then the supreme magistrate to be a Baptist, what kind of ministers ought he in that case to appoint?

Mrs. Law. I have not sufficiently considered the subject to be able to answer you.

Mir. Then, Madam, permit me to answer the question myself. I think that a Baptist king ought not to choose ministers for Episcopalian, or Independent, or Presbyterian churches; and I am confident that a Baptist church would not acknowledge for its minister a person set over them by even a Baptist king.

Mrs. Law. Suppose he leave all congregations to choose their own ministers, may he not establish his own denomination?

Mir. In what way?

Mrs. Law. By the payment of their ministers out of the public revenue.

Mir. Observe, Madam, we are still supposing the supreme magistrate to be a Baptist. You must therefore suppose the Baptists to be the established sect. But would it not be very hard for all other denominations to maintain their own ministers and Baptist ministers likewise? And would it not be very ungenerous and unchristian for Baptist ministers and congregations to suffer themselves to be thus exalted and favoured above their brethren.

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Mrs. Law. Is not this objection removed by the consideration that the established religion is the religion of the majority.

Mir. A great majority of the people of England go to no place of worship at all: therefore it cannot be said that the established religion is the religion of the majority. But if it were, it ought not to claim any thing more than an equal and impartial protection of its professors in their civil and religious rights. I do not see how religious establishments can be defended upon any principle whatever. If the religion of the magistrate must be established, then error and even infidelity may chance to be established. If the religion of the majority must be established, then popery may require to be established, and that even by a protestant king.

Mrs. Law. Suppose one sect of Christians to excel all others in doctrine, discipline, and practice, ought we not to wish that to be established?

Mir. Such a sect, Madam, would not consent to receive temporal benefits at the expense of its brethren. However, if it did, they would be of no use to it. Religion is of such a nature, that it will not bear to be breathed upon by the state: the breath of the state always pollutes it. It is a plant which flourishes more in the shade of poverty and obscurity, than in the sunshine of worldly prosperity. A good king cannot render religion greater service than an equally pious poor man renders it. Worldly power, worldly honour, and worldly riches, enervate, enfeeble, and corrupt it.

Mrs. Law. If the church of England be excellent in itself, I do not see what injury it can sustain from being established by law.

Mir. I disapprove of the church of England on many other accounts, such as her constitution, her discipline, her officers, the doctrines generally preached in her, her ceremonies, her set forms of prayer, her fasts and festivals, and other things: but if all these things, and every thing else in her were unexceptionable, yet, being imposed on all her

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members by the authority of the civil magistrate, I cannot become a member of her without violating that allegiance which I owe to Jesus Christ as the only king and law-giver of his church. Besides, if there be any thing in the church of England which is scriptural, and which yet is not to be found among dissenters, it is in the power of their churches to adopt it. If they can find archbishops and lordbishops, deans and sub-deans, archdeacons and prebendaries, canons and minor canons, in the New Testament, dissenting churches may have them if they please, and may appoint *men who fear God* to those offices, which is not so likely to be the case when they are appointed by the state.

Mrs. Law. Is not our liturgy excellent?

Mir. I disapprove of the reading of prayers. The liturgy contains many excellent things: it would however, have been more free from faults, if the old popish prayer book had been less closely adhered to. But if it were more excellent than it is, it is in the power of our churches to adopt it, or they can adopt its excellencies and leave behind its imperfections. We read nothing, however, concerning forms of prayer, in the New Testament; and I believe they did not come into use till Christianity was greatly corrupted, and till the spirit of prayer had declined in its ministers.

Mrs. Law. What do you think of our ceremonies?

Mir. If there be any thing valuable in them, our churches have it in their power to adopt it. But they can find neither precept nor example in the word of God for bowing toward the east, for signing with the cross in baptism, for the baptizing of bells, for sprinkling holy water, and for the other ceremonies of the churches of England and Rome. They esteem it their duty to obey the commandments of God; but they dare not introduce *will-worship* into religion, nor become *subject to ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men.*

Mrs. Law. Surely, Miss Barnwell, you are prejudiced against the church of England.

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Mir. Indeed, Madam, I am not; nor is that the case with the Christians with whom I associate. Only show to us from Scripture, that we practise any thing which we ought not to practise, or that we reject any thing which we ought not to reject, and we will return you our sincere thanks. We are not only open to conviction, but we are willing and *able* to make the proposed alteration. You cannot say the same to us: I pity you on this account. Your church admits of no improvement: none of its errors can be rectified, none of its imperfections removed; none of its defects supplied. All the congregations in a diocese, with the clergy and bishop at their head, cannot make a single alteration; no, nor yet all the congregations, and clergymen, and bishops in a province, with the archbishop at their head. The sun might as well never shine for you; the parish clock must never be set by it; it must always go as it does. To us, on the contrary, the word of God is a constant directory; and we are at liberty to obey every one of the divine commands.

Mrs. Law. There is, however, one jewel of which I think you cannot deprive us; and that is, the piety of those great men by whom the church of England was founded.

Mir. Their memory I shall ever revere. They performed a great deal, considering the darkness of the time in which they lived, and the short space they had to do it in. But they were reformers, rather than founders. The church of England is not a new church built, but an old one mended.—We also can boast of thousands of worthies from almost the morning of the Reformation to the present time; we can boast of two thousand ministers who joined us from the church in one day, because they would not worship God according to the commandments of men. We can tell of thousands who died in prison, merely because they were dissenters, of others who had trial of cruel mockings; and of others who were destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. Soon after the Reformers had begun their work, they were called to lay down their lives; and they were succeeded by men of

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another spirit. The Nonconformists were their true descendants, and carried on that reformation which they had only begun. Were Latimer and Ridley now upon earth, (to say nothing of bishop Hooper, who might even then be called a dissenter,) I believe that they would associate with us. The Pharisees venerated the memory of Moses, and the scribes sat in his seat: but when Moses and Elijah visited our world, they associated not with them, but with men of a new sect, upon which the Jewish priests looked with contempt.

Mrs. Law concluded with saying, that she had not sufficiently considered the controversy; but that, although she could say nothing more in defence of national churches, it would be wrong for her to infer that nothing more could be said. She wished me every blessing, and desired me to do nothing contrary to my conscience. This kind treatment was all I could either expect or wish; and I should be glad if all religious people would terminate their disputes in as amiable a manner.

I attend on the ministry of Mr. Lowe, a worthy Baptist minister who preaches at Barnwell: but my father is very angry, and my mother treats me with contempt for associating with beggars, as she terms a poor but decent people who compose the greatest part of his congregation. I shall not defile my paper with her ill-natured speeches; for what better could be expected from a proud and irreligious woman.

As a Christian should live as nearly as possible by rule, and as, unless this be done, we cannot hope to make any considerable progress in the divine life, it will greatly oblige my dear friend and myself, if you will favour us with your thoughts on this subject.

I ever remain, my dear aunt,

Your affectionate niece,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

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LETTER XXV.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

SINCE I wrote to you last, I have had many trials. In reading the Scriptures, such unbelieving and sometimes blasphemous thoughts have intruded themselves, that I have started, and shuddered with horror. I have also been tempted to think that after all I might deceive myself, and be nothing but a hypocrite.

On my informing our friend Thomas of these things, he told me that he was persuaded I had a fever, and that my complaint would be removed with my disorder: indeed I have been far from being well for some time. Thomas observed, that he had no doubt but those blasphemous thoughts, which may be justly compared to fiery darts, were caused by the wicked one, who takes occasion, from the different states and temperaments of our bodies, as well as from our various ages, constitutions and circumstances, to make use of such temptations as he judges will succeed. Thus, said he, the hunger of Christ, and the fear of Peter, were made use of by Satan, as the means by which he would gladly have destroyed them. With regard to your being tempted to fear that after all you may prove a hypocrite, know, my friend, that unreasonable fears, as well as unreasonable hopes, ought to be discarded by our better judgment. There is, continued he, a cautious, child-like fear, implanted in the hearts of all God's children; and this fear is not quieted by any thing less than a dependence upon the Redeemer alone for righteousness and strength, and a settled purpose to take up his cross daily, and to be obedient to all his commands. This kind of fear may justly by called the barometer of prayer; for in proportion as it rises, we are brought low before the footstool of the divine majesty, which is a cer-

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tain prelude to our exaltation. In common the fears of God's children are not anxious, corroding and tormenting, but are over-balanced by a settled and well-founded hope. And on the contrary their hope is not of the bold and presumptuous kind, or such as permits them to do those things deliberately which they know are offensive to God. No, my dear friend, their happiest moments are balanced with fear, in order that they may be kept from carrying too much sail, and running upon rocks and quicksands. Thus our God, if we are in danger of being exalted above measure, permits some thorn in the flesh to wound us, some messenger of Satan mercifully to buffet us; because this transitory life is not our rest. Or if we are likely to sink in floods of temptations and trials, he puts out his hand to save us; like as our Lord saved Peter, whose faith failed him when walking on the waves.

It seems then, Thomas, said I, that if our hope of eternal life be such as to keep us from tormenting fears, it is sufficient for this imperfect state; and that, on the other hand, if our fear is the mean of our walking cautiously, humbly, and circumspectly, it ought to be considered as a blessing rather than as an impediment. To this my friend fully agreed.

O Madam, you can scarcely conceive how happy I am at times in this good man's company. I wish I could say that that was the case at home: but I have much reason to bless God that it is no worse with me. My father returned a week past; and my sister and father Albino have spared no pains to inform him what an incorrigible heretic I am. They told him also of the letter I received from Mr. Charles Clifford. But truly, Madam, he is the best of fathers; for instead of reproaching me, he said, my friends, this sweet lamb (for so he kindly called me) has wandered from the fold of Christ; but instead of worrying her, it becomes us to imitate the good Shepherd of Israel, who carries the lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young. Come, my child, (taking hold of my hand and kissing it,) make the heart of your afflicted parent

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glad, by giving me hopes that we shall spend a long eternity together in the presence of God. Alas, my dear love, what is time? It is like a tale that is told. But eternity, how long! Think, my Eusebia, what it is which renders us capable of enjoying the beatific vision. It is holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. And notwithstanding all that Mr. Clifford has blasphemously said against the church of Rome, its enemies must confess that a great number of its members in every age have been famous for holiness. Now that church cannot in its own nature be bad, whose institutions have had such salutary effects: nor can the religion of protestants be good, whose lives in general are notoriously unholy. Where do you find among protestants, those who leave the world, that they may be entirely dedicated to the service of God; or any who undergo voluntary sufferings, because they have sinned against so great and so good a being? Or indeed, where do you find among them that primitive hospitality, and those almsdeeds, for which the church of Rome has always been so eminent? These are realities. In judging therefore of things, we should not judge with prejudice, nor according to fallacious appearances; but we should judge righteous judgment. There may have been many feigned miracles among us, and several other things not altogether defensible: but did a wise man ever throw away an apple because there was a speck in it? While we ourselves are imperfect creatures, we cannot with any justice or propriety expect perfection in others. This I maintain, that the church of Rome has in all ages been friendly to holiness of life, and has studied every method to promote it: they, therefore, who find fault, must do it either from captiousness or ignorance. My dear child, consider, I conjure you, these things which you know to be true, and leave those pernicious heresies into which you have been so unhappily deluded.

This tender usage, and this zeal for my happiness, melted me into tears. After I had a little recovered myself, I took hold of my dear parent's hand, and embraced it. O

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my good, my kind father, cried I, I trust that God will indeed favour us so highly as to cause us to spend an eternity together in his presence. It is my constant prayer that this may be the case. O thou Father of mercies, grant for the sake of thy dear Son, that these my friends may come to me; for thou knowest I cannot go to them. You must not say so, interrupted father Albino. Your honoured parent has shown that the church of Rome has always been friendly to holiness of life. In proof of the same thing, I may also appeal to the saints, and even to the days set apart to commemorate their bright example, which are intended to help us forward in our Christian course. Pray, my child, look around you, and see if among all your heretical acquaintances, you can find any one whose purse is ever open, like that of your father, to relieve the distresses, and alleviate the miseries of mankind. Moreover, you will not easily find those who spend as much time in their closets in a year, as he does in a day: and in their families they are alike remiss. Whereas you, my child, have been brought up in a family, where prayer without ceasing has been offered to the divine Majesty, both with you and for you; so that your defection from the only true church of Christ is as amazing as it is dreadful.

Pray, my good father, replied I, hear me patiently. I do indeed grant, that that religion is the most perfect which is the best calculated to promote holiness of life; and I am not to learn, blessed be God, that without personal holiness no man shall see the Lord. Yet I can conceive it to be possible, that a person may give all his goods to feed the poor, and even his body to be burned, and be destitute of love to the true God. I can also easily conceive, that persons may be very diligent in private, domestic, and public worship, while they have only the form of godliness, and are destitute of the power. True religion consists in a knowledge of the true God, and of his Son Jesus Christ; and in being conformed to him through the influence of the holy Spirit, who, to accomplish these desirable ends, takes of the things of Jesus which are revealed in

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the Scriptures, and shows them unto us. The children of God are sanctified by the truth, and not by any contrivances of men. With regard to prayer, although he is certainly no Christian who is not habitually breathing out his soul unto God in prayer, yet it would not follow that we were Christians, were we to spend twenty hours out of the four-and-twenty in private, family, and public worship; since, without faith, or a right understanding and belief of divine truth, it is impossible to please God. The Pharisees made long prayers, and were not destitute of a form of godliness; and the Turks in general most conscientiously pray five times a day, and will not neglect the appointed times of prayer, be their business ever so urgent. Zeal may prove a person to be superstitious; but it does not prove him to be holy, unless it be regulated by the oracles of truth.

And pray, my dear child, cried my father, who is most likely to understand the oracles of truth? The fathers, doctors, and learned men of our church, some of whom lived in the days of the apostles; or you, a mere babe, who indeed are almost literally but of yesterday?

If the Scriptures, Sir, are true, replied I, the chance is in my favour; since they declare that God has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.

Alas, Sir, cried father Albino, whatever you say, she has an answer at her tongue's end. This is the old road which we have travelled over and over again. Scripture may be brought to prove almost any thing, which shows the necessity of our understanding it as the church does. Here lies the great difference between us and heretics. If you ask a catholic what is the rule of his faith and practice, he will tell you, The Scriptures, as they have been understood by the church in all ages, which church those very Scriptures declare to be the pillar and ground of the truth. If you ask a heretic what is the rule of his faith, he will also tell you, The Scriptures; but if you further ask him who is to judge of the sense of the Scriptures, he re-

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ry modestly replies, himself. When a person is judge in his own cause, it is no marvel if he decides in his own favour.

I was going to tell Signior Albino, that the servants of Jesus are both the only true church of Christ, and also the only pillars or supporters of the truth; but my father stopped me by observing, that the friends of the Redeemer manifest their love to him by obeying, and not by disputing. He therefore earnestly desired me, he said, to weigh these things calmly, and to endeavour to manifest my love to God by my obedience to my parent.

The morning after the above conversation, my father told me, that, as the weather began to be fine, he and father Albino intended to take a journey to St. Omer's, to see my brother; and he earnestly entreated me to accompany him, and to take the veil, either at that city, where there are always a great many English people, or at Calais, if I should like that place better. Father Albino backed this request by observing, that, in the company of the holy sisters, I should soon forget my unhappy prejudices; and that he should expect no less than to hear I was become a saint.

I implored my father, on my knees, not to think of placing me in a nunnery; for that I would rather be turned out of doors, than be imprisoned for life with persons with whom I could expect no kind of happiness.

Well, my child, cried my father, if you will consent to go with us to see your brother, for whom I know you have the most sincere affection, I give you my word and honour that no method shall be used to make you comply with my request, except entreaty. But I flatter myself, my dear Eusebia, that the piety and persuasion of your dear brother may be the means of your seeing both your duty and your happiness, which are so inseparably connected.

Ah, my dear child, said father Albino, if you should escape this dreadful shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, I solemnly vow to go on a pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella.

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My dear father also vowed, if I was once more mercifully brought into the bosom of the church, that he would give to our Lady of Loretto a new robe, and a pair of silver candlesticks of fifty pounds weight.

I could do no less than thank my friends for the concern and zeal they manifested for my welfare: and I promised to go with my father on the conditions he had mentioned; for I long to see my brother, between whom and myself the mutual affection was so great that one soul seemed to animate us both.

I do not know when we shall set out, but I expect it will be soon; nor do I know whether my sister will accompany us. I rather wish she may not, as she has greatly persecuted me. Poor girl, the greater is her misfortune. I ought not to think it hard; for who in their right minds would not rather suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season?

You may depend upon it, Madam, that I shall embrace every opportunity of writing to you, which my dear Miss Barnwell must consider as writing to her also; and I hope to have the pleasure of copying another of Mrs. Worthington's letters for the perusal of my brother. I have transcribed in a fair hand the whole of our correspondence; since, as my friends as well as myself will be accused to him of heresy, it is but just he should see wherein our heresy consists. Requesting the prayers of you and my dear Miranda, that God will mercifully preserve me, I once more subscribe myself,

Dear Madam,

Your affectionate friend, and

Humble servant,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

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LETTER XXVI.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR MISS NEVILLE,

I AM sorry that you are going into a popish country; but having promised to accompany your father, you cannot retract, especially as he has engaged not to force you into a nunnery. I commend you to the care and guidance of the Shepherd of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps. Cast all your care upon him, my dear friend, for he careth for you.

The argument used by your friends to prove the excellence of the church of Rome, founded upon the holiness of many of its members, is inconclusive. In self-denial and mortifications of almost every kind, the devotees in the most corrupt religions have neither been exceeded nor equalled by catholics or protestants. Many of the Hindoos use such cruelty to their bodies in order to atone for their sins, that the hair-shirts worn by catholics on the same account, together with their whipping themselves, and other austerities, bear scarcely any proportion to it. The priests of Baal also were sincere worshippers of that senseless idol; witness their crying unto him from morning to evening, and cutting themselves with knives and lancets; and I have no doubt but in their day they had the repute of being very holy men, as well as those idolaters who made their children pass through the fire to Moloch, giving the fruit of their bodies for the sin of their souls.

I believe mortals have never erred more concerning any one thing than concerning holiness. The generality seem to think, that if they are sincere, devout, and what is called moral, they must be holy. But it ought to be considered that devotion may have for its object an idol of the imagination; an unknown God, who may be ignorantly

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worshipped. Hence our Lord lays so great a stress upon the knowledge of the true God, and of the Messiah, who is the only medium of access to him whom no man hath seen nor can see.

The Old and New Testaments contain the revealed mind of God. The love of that mind is the essence of true holiness. They who love the mind of God love God, and feel the deepest contrition on account of the sins of their most holy things. From these principles flows that obedience which is accepted by God after it has been washed in the blood of the Saviour. Any other holiness is no better than suffering coals of fire to lie on the head, with the Hindoo; than visiting the tomb of Mahomet, with the mussulman; or than going on pilgrimage, with the catholic, to what he calls the holy land.

I pray, my dear child, that our correspondence which you have transcribed for your brother's perusal, may have a proper effect. The obedience and death of Christ are the sin-offering, the peace-offering, and the grand atonement, whereby a guilty sinner has access to God. If your brother has had his sins set in array before him, and if he has had a view of the mountains of divine wrath which will certainly overwhelm the ungodly, the letters which you have transcribed may with the divine blessing convince him that nothing can recommend him to the divine favour but the blood of the Saviour. Being once convinced of this, he will esteem the many things substituted by both catholics and protestants in its room, as things of no value. Thus Paul esteemed every thing, when compared with the knowledge of Christ, and with being found in him, not having his own righteousness.

In my niece's last letter is a dialogue between her and Mrs. Law upon the subject of dissent from national religions. Any religion would do better for a state religion than Christianity, because no other religion would be thereby injured: whereas Christianity, by its alliance with the state, is greatly debased. The only motive for teaching and professing Christianity ought to be the hope of

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eternal life. Should it be objected, that dissenting teachers as well as others live by preaching the gospel, it may be replied, that there are few instances wherein the abilities and character required of a dissenting minister might not be more profitably engaged in trade, manufactures, and merchandize, or in the professions of medicine and the law.

Your brother may possibly reply, that the catholics in England are in this respect upon the same footing with other dissenters. I answer, This is not the case; for, the consciences of Roman catholics being under the direction of the bishop of Rome, they are obliged to approve of a national religion. *When they cease to do this, they are Roman catholics in nothing but the name;* for the very sting and poison of popery consist in the alliance between church and state; or in the kings of the earth giving their power to that ravenous beast, which is represented in the Revelation as the IMAGE of Rome pagan. But for the interposition of the kings of the earth, the Scriptures could not for so many ages have been kept out of the hands of the people. The invention of printing, that wonderful art, was such a cause of the dissemination of knowledge, that from that moment we may date the beginning of the fall of antichrist. A partial reformation took place in several countries of Europe, and popery, even in popish countries, received a rude shock: but this is nothing to what it is to receive; for the word of God must be accomplished. The time approaches when national religions will fall to rise no more. Indeed, a knowledge of the pride, ignorance, covetousness, and cruelty of the great body of the clergy of all establishments, will be so abundantly transmitted to future generations by the faithful page of history, that when the mother of harlots and her daughters are buried, there will be no danger of their rising from the dead.

I do not wonder that there are some dissenting ministers who approve of religious establishments under what they call proper regulations. Human nature is the same out of national churches as in them. It is because they

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desire to be independent of their people. I have however long observed, that, in general, where ministers among the dissenters walk in a becoming manner, no people meet with greater respect Where it is otherwise, it commonly arises from a real or supposed difference of sentiments. In such a case, it may be prudent for a minister to remove to a place where his labours will be more acceptable: and, if he has behaved properly, in doing this he will find no difficulty. But if the great majority of the people where he has laboured should desire him to continue among them, and he should comply with this desire, the minority will probably secede. If any should form an objection from this to the independency of churches, we may reply, that in this life there is nothing perfect; and that every rose has its thorn. Frequently, however, such divisions are necessary, and, instead of being an evil, are a great good. In process of time, the majority of a church of protestant dissenters are liable to depart from the faith and practice of their pious ancestors. A minister of their own sentiments will probably be chosen. It will then be prudent for the minority peaceably to withdraw. And it ought to be esteemed a great mercy that they can do so: for what fellowship has Christ with Belial; or those who tremble at God's word, with persons who appear not to pay an implicit obedience to what he has revealed? It is a great imperfection adhering to national churches, that they are composed of Calvinists, Arminians, Arians, Socinians, and the visibly dishonest and profane. Such a heterogeneous mixture, united neither by truth, nor love, nor civility, can derive no benefit from church-fellowship. When they meet together to commemorate the death of Christ, and to profess, in the presence of God, that, as they partake of one bread, so they consider themselves as one body, united together by faith and love;—if they think at all, they must consider this as solemn mockery.

The church of Rome, my dear friend, has this imperfection in common with other national churches, and frequently in a much greater degree. If, therefore, I were

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to be with your brother at St. Omer's, I would entreat him to read his New Testament on his knees, and to endeavour to learn from that invaluable book, whether the church or kingdom of Christ was intended to be a worldly kingdom, contrary to the good confession testified by Christ before Pilate, that his kingdom was not of this world.

Pray give my kind love to your brother. He will perceive that in writing this letter, I did not forget him. I have had two things principally in view; first, the nature of Christ's church or kingdom; and secondly, the nature of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.

As we cannot expect to hear regularly from you, and as we shall wish to know how you spend your time in France, I beg you will minute every night the occurrences of the day, especially the conversations in which you shall have been engaged. A journal of this kind will exceedingly oblige me. Indeed I shall esteem nothing uninteresting that concerns my dear friend.

Wishing you a prosperous journey, and the presence of him who has promised to be with his children to the end of the world,

I am, with the greatest esteem,
My dear Miss Neville,
Your affectionate friend,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XXVII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I HAVE written a letter to Miss Eusebia Neville, which I shall enclose in a cover to you, and which you will endeavour to convey to her before she sets out for St. Omer's.

I do not expect, my dear Miranda, that you will have much comfort at home. Light cannot have fellowship

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with darkness, nor Christ with Belial. I shall expect you therefore to share with me at Islington what God has mercifully left me of my fortune. You had great, and apparently just expectations of an ample fortune yourself, being the only child of a parent more than sixty years of age: but you will more and more perceive that nothing in this world is to be accounted of. Remember, that God as a sovereign has a right to dispose both of us and ours; it becomes us then to be still, and to know that he is God. The remainder of unbelief and of a corrupt nature never appears more conspicuously than in discontent and impatience under the cross. Our God knows what is best for us; he proportions our sufferings to our strength; and I doubt not we shall have reason to acknowledge, that he has led us through the wilderness by a right way, and that all things have worked together for our good.

I have read your conversation with Mrs. Law, and have not the least doubt that national churches will come to an end. The fall of them will be the fall of the kingdom of antichrist. I do not deny that many servants of God are to be found in the different streets of Babylon: but his command is, *Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* If there were no Christians in those antichristian communities, they would not be commanded to come out from them. I cannot say that I wish the corporation and test acts to be repealed; for though I consider them as unjust towards dissenters, and as highly offensive to God by profaning a divine institution, yet if dissenters were more mingled with the world, it might be injurious to them in a religious view. Those acts too are the mark of the man of sin: and why should dissenters try to wash that Ethiopian white?

I shall now endeavour, agreeably to your desire, briefly to state the rules by which a Christian ought daily to conduct himself.

It is unnecessary for me to remark that the word of God is the only rule of faith and practice. You are fully es-

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tablished in this truth, and need not be reminded that it will be your duty to measure the following weak attempt by that unerring standard.

The best general rule that I know of is to intend the divine glory, in our business, our eating, our drinking, our recreation, and indeed in every action of our lives. We ought to lay it down as a preliminary, that being bought with so great a price as the blood of Jesus, we henceforth are not our own; but that our time, and all that we are, and all that we have, belong to God; and that he has bestowed them upon us, only that we may use them to his glory, with which our happiness is invariably connected. This is so obvious a truth, that I should think no man, I am certain no Christian will dispute it.

Our time, after that part of it has been deducted which is sufficient for the refreshment of the body by sleep, naturally divides itself into the portions assigned to the following particulars :—Prayer, reading the Scriptures, meditation, business, food, and recreation; of which in their order.

The servants of God have a freedom of access into his presence at all times through the Mediator. When professors of religion do not frequently make use of this privilege, it is a certain sign of one of these two things; either that they are entire strangers to the divine life, or that their souls are in an unprosperous and languishing state. Beside praying always, or habitually, by pouring out your soul to God in ejaculatory breathings, I would recommend it to you to have stated times for private prayer. The prophet Daniel, though a great statesman, and immersed in public business, found time to engage in this divine exercise three times a day; and I have no doubt he only did that which was commonly practised by God's people. Peter went up to the top of the house to pray about the sixth hour, which answers to our noon; and it is reasonable to suppose that he began and ended the day in the like manner. With regard to morning and evening prayer, it will be sufficient to say, that I would wish you to defer

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neither of them too long. If any thing, however, should accidentally hinder you from being exact to your time, by no means omit it; for one omission makes way for another. Begin with prayer, which I would wish you to perform in a kneeling posture; for though that may seem to some indifferent, yet we need to be impressed with an awful sense of the disproportion which there is between such worms as we are, and that august Being whom we approach. As to the manner, either use mental prayer, or let your words be so low that no person can distinguish them at your closet door. To do otherwise savours too much of Pharisaical hypocrisy; at least it will cause your good to be evil spoken of, and not without reason. In general, I would caution you against continuing it too long: doing so has a tendency to beget formality. Endeavour to impress your mind with a deep sense of the solemnity of the duty, and that you are actually as much in the divine presence as if you beheld the adorable Jehovah. Begin with adoration, or hallowing of the name of God. To this will naturally succeed thanksgiving, in which you cannot be at a loss for matter; since we are made partakers of eternal life through, and live every moment upon, the divine favour. It will then be proper to call to mind your particular transgressions, whether in thought, word, or deed; and humbly to confess them before the majesty of heaven and earth. Close all with petition. Let it be your request that he will pardon your sins for the sake of his dear Son, and that he will give you every needful mercy, especially his Spirit to guide and guard you, and to increase your knowledge and approbation of those things which are most excellent. Remember that God only can deliver you from evil, and from that evil one who desires to have us that he may sift us as wheat. Lastly, intercede for those whom you are in duty bound to pray for; your relatives and friends; those whom you know to be in distress of body or mind; and in general the whole cause and kingdom of Christ, as also the government and community of which you are a member. I would rather wish you, my child, to be deeply im-

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pressed with a sense of your wants, and of God's ability to supply them, than to dwell long upon each particular. Remember also the promises which God has made to his people, and plead them with him. It may not be amiss to add, that one advantage resulting from prayer is, that it impresses our minds with an habitual sense of our wants, and of our dependence on the divine Being. For the most part, when our God intends to bestow a mercy he gives a spirit of supplication, that we may have an opportunity of observing the answers of our petitions. This strengthens our faith, inflames our love, and makes us travel the heavenly road with cheerfulness and vigour.

Either before or after prayer I advise you to read a chapter out of the Old or New Testament in order. You will thereby have a better opportunity of observing the connexion, and understanding the mind of the Holy Spirit. In reading these divine writings, we should remember that they are not the words of men, but the words of the living God; even those words by which we shall be judged at the last day. It can never be unnecessary to remind you, my dear niece, that every part of religious worship, whether public or private, is a mean to regulate our judgment, our temper, and our practice; and that unless these ends are answered, we receive no real advantage. Nay, we ought to beware lest our very strictness in the path of duty should lead us to be proud and vain-glorious. I acknowledge this cannot happen, unless a departure from the truth first take place. We should therefore never lose sight of this grand axiom, this first principle of the gospel, that our God accepteth our persons and our services, merely and entirely, from first to last, only on account of what his well-beloved Son has done and suffered for us. This truth is the key of divine revelation: a departure from it would reduce our religion to a level with paganism. As the obedience of Christ, which in fact includes his sufferings, proceeded from God's eternal love to his people, so is it the only ground of their acceptance with him; and it is by causing them to believe this truth that

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he reconciles them to himself. This it is which is first and principally taught us in the Lord's supper, where we learn, that the broken body and the shed blood of the Son of God are the life of our souls, in the same manner as bread and wine are the life of our bodies. You will not wonder that I press the consideration of this so forcibly; for where this truth is disregarded, hypocrisy begins.

Meditation, as a Christian duty, is a thinking on divine things. The mind being always employed, our happiness will much consist in finding it proper employment when it is not engaged about the necessary affairs of life. The subjects of meditation are numberless; but those about which a Christian should be engaged, are chiefly God and himself. God;—the wisdom, power, and goodness, which he has manifested in the works of creation; and the justice, mercy, and hatred of sin, which he has displayed in redemption. These may be greatly divided and sub-divided; but I only mention them in the briefest manner. Ourselves;—the importance of our being brought into existence; what we are capable of enjoying or suffering; and the eternity that is before us, during which we must be either happy in the presence of God, or excluded from the realms of bliss. These subjects furnish, likewise, an inexhaustible fund for conversation. It is to be lamented that many waste their social hours in the retailing of slander, more perhaps for want of better topics than through malevolence.

To labour in some useful employment, either for the benefit of ourselves or others, is that in which all the servants of God should study to glorify him. It is not only his command that we should be diligent in business; but our health and well-being depend under him upon an active and industrious life. If idleness be not clothed with rags, as it often is, and to which it always tends, yet our health will be exceedingly impaired by indolence and inactivity: not to mention the guilt that is contracted by living in the breach of the divine commands, and the temptations to which we thereby expose ourselves; for

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we shall find by experience, that when we have nothing to do, Satan will be busy with his temptations. It should likewise be our study to employ ourselves in such a manner that our hearts may not reproach us in our closets with being unprofitable servants, when we take a view of our actions.

The next portion of time which I shall consider, is that occupied in refreshing the body with food. This, as well as every other action of our lives, ought to be done to the glory of God; and in this as well as in every other thing, our duty and happiness are connected. By no means take the intemperate for your pattern: they have their reward, and a dreadful one it is, in this life. An intemperate person is not only a dishonour to religion, but he renders himself unfit for prayer, meditation, and every other duty.

Temperance is the grand elixir of life. The temperate man enjoys a healthful body, and if he be a Christian, a tranquil mind, as long as God intended the machine should last, and then is gathered to his fathers as a shock of corn fully ripe. Temperance renders the body of a Christian a proper habitation for his soul. It makes him calm and serene amid troubles and temptations; and enables him to enjoy the blessings of time, and the prospects of eternity, with additional pleasure. The temperate man relishes his food better than he whose appetite is palled by repletion; so that he in fact is the epicure; while he who is intemperate never tastes any pleasant food, nor enjoys a good meal.

"People in the lower ranks," says Dr. Mead, "enjoy the common advantages of existence more intensely than those in the higher walks of life. Wholesome food is acquired by moderate labour, which improves the appetite and digestion. Hence sound sleep, uninterrupted by corroding cares, refreshes the wearied limbs. How vastly inferior to these blessings are the delicacies of the affluent, which are ever accompanied with real evils. Their appetites, in order to relish their food, must be sti-

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mulated by poignant sauces, which heat and vitiate the blood, and render the body liable to distempers. Their excesses disturb their repose, and their children are afflicted with infirmities through the course of a languid life, which seldom reaches to old age."

I come now to recreation. And here I must premise, that a morose gloominess is no part of Christianity. If the heirs of eternal glory be not cheerful, I know not who should be so. It is true that routs, balls, and assemblies have lost their power of delighting us, because at them we can neither give satisfaction nor receive it. Yet the friendship and conversation of the children of God much more than balance the loss of such frothy pleasures. It is more than probable you will not think, with the polite world, that it is worth your while to go fifty or a hundred miles to a horse-race; but still, in your library, in your garden, or in the field, you will find an ample compensation. A little reading and practice will give you a competent knowledge of botany. There you will learn, that the weeds you trample under your feet, and which perhaps you may look upon as useless cumberers of the ground, are so many alembics, in which the Almighty Physician prepares healing juices and remedies for mankind. If you choose to be more exquisitely, yet as innocently gratified, endeavour to improve your knowledge in the different parts of natural philosophy. It will not be difficult for you to obtain a general knowledge of astronomy, so far at least as to excite your admiration of the wisdom of that God who created, and who governs these innumerable worlds of light.

I have known you proud, Miranda, in telling me that your father did this or that; and I have commended the honest pleasure. But now you may take a survey of the august dome under which you are placed, and may cry out, when you view those stupendous bodies which perform their revolutions round the sun, together with those myriads of stars which probably are other suns surrounded by attendant worlds, All these were created by, and belong

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to my Father! Do you think the finest opera-air ever gave such heart-felt pleasure as such a thought? No. In real delights, in the most sublime pleasures, Christians are more extravagant and luxurious than the most expensive prodigals.

It becomes those who are determined to serve either God and mammon, or God and pleasure, in the world's sense of that term, to remember Lot's wife. They look back with longing eyes upon the things of time and sense, as she looked back upon Sodom; and they will be made fearful monuments of his vengeance, who is a jealous God, and who will not suffer any to look behind them after having put their hand to the plough.

The amount of what I intended to say concerning the use of your time is this. Let it be entirely spent in walking with God. Whether you are engaged in prayer, in reading the Scriptures, in meditation, in labour, in eating and drinking, or in recreation, let all be done to his glory. At the same time, beware of a spirit of formality and self-dependence; and trust only in the perfect obedience and atonement of the Son of God for eternal life. Wishing you to be much in earnest, as I trust you are, about the one thing needful, I continue,

My dear Miranda,

Your affectionate aunt,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XXVIII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I RECEIVED your kind letter, and have also seen your letter to Miss Barnwell. Your directions for the spending of time I have read with pleasure.

I feel my unhappiness more and more in being in a family where I can have no religious conversation, and

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where we look upon one another as travelling to everlasting perdition. My poor sister continues very unkind. She tells me that the bishops in the time of queen Mary were too lenient; and that things would not have been at their present pass, if for every one whom they burnt they had burnt a thousand. I have no doubt, continued she, that the massacres, as they are called, at Paris, and other places, which these heretics make so much noise about, were deferred till every other method had proved ineffectual.

This was part of the conversation this morning at breakfast. But I am glad to say that my father did not appear to relish these inhuman speeches. He enjoined my sister silence; and told her and father Albino, who was equally violent, that it was his own opinion, with deference however to those of better judgment, that the bishops had been too rash and precipitate, and that more gentle remedies would have been attended with better success. This point my father and the priest disputed for some time; and I am sorry to add, that my dear parent allowed, that when every other remedy had been long tried in vain, then, and not before, such unfruitful and pernicious trees ought to be cut down as cumberers of the ground. How different this from the gentle, meek, and benevolent spirit of the Redeemer! Our heavenly Father suffers long and is kind. And his only and well-beloved Son went about doing good unto all, and evil to none; and with his dying breath prayed even for his murderers, saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. He is indeed the Prince of Peace. He suffers not his children to render evil for evil, but commands them to do good to, and pray for, their implacable enemies. When the Samaritans would not receive him, some of his disciples, too much in the spirit of antichrist, desired permission to command fire to come down from heaven to consume them; but he told them that they knew not what manner of spirit they were of.

Signior Albino justified his fiery zeal, by asserting that the heretics are enemies to all righteousness, and that

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they who suffered in the reign of queen Mary were sinners of the deepest dye, being the spawn of that arch-heretic Calvin.

And I suppose, Eusebia, said my father, you are what heretics call a Calvinist. My child, I would sooner be an atheist than a Calvinist.

Ah, my dear father, said I, you and my friends know not what you may yet be. The Lord of the universe frequently arrests us when we are upon the full career to destruction. Saul, at the time that he was breathing out threatenings against the friends of Jesus, was stopped by an almighty hand; and he never forgot the distinguishing mercy.

And pray, said Signior Albino, what was the reason that St. Paul obtained mercy? He himself assigns it;—he tells us that what he did was done ignorantly in unbelief.

And did not, replied I, his fellow-travellers, and the greatest part of his nation, reject the Messiah, through ignorance and unbelief as well as he? How was it then that he only found mercy, and not they also?

What, cried my sister angrily, would you persuade us that every body may not be saved if they will?

By no means, replied I; if any person is willing to be saved by Jesus Christ, that person is in fact already saved.

My mouth was stopped by my father's telling me, that these were things with which we had no concern; and that the church had wisely kept the Scriptures out of the hands of the common people. Father Albino applauded the observation, and finished the conversation by gravely asserting, that the Bible had made more heretics than all the books in the world besides.

My thoughts almost continually dwell on my dear Miranda. How unwisely has Mr. Barnwell acted! He and Mrs. Barnwell are now at Bath, where she has lost at play upwards of two hundred pounds. My father told us he was informed of this by a friend of his just come from that place. Miranda did not choose to go, so that I cannot tell whether she knows of it yet. Poor girl, how unhappy must she be in such a family.

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Gaming is a vice which springs from idleness and covetousness. Time, though it be so precious, hangs upon the hands of the indolent. Unwilling to employ themselves as they ought, they have recourse to gaming. When they are become dexterous at this idle amusement, then covetousness steps in, and informs them how they may gratify their thirst for gain. Well! this is a vice which no Christian, I think, runs any hazard of falling into. If Christianity only taught its votaries to be content with such things as they have, it would be infinitely useful to mankind. I must say in behalf of my father, that he always abhorred gaming. He often remarks, when he sees people playing at cards, that he looks upon them as pickpockets and highwaymen in the bud; and that the best reason which can be assigned for their conduct is, their being unqualified to bear a part in any profitable conversation. So much does he despise gaming of every kind, that he never would have a ticket in the lottery. It is a way of raising money, he says, which is calculated to make servants rob their masters; and to make debtors rob their creditors, by laying out that money in tickets with which they ought to pay their debts. Indeed, Madam, my father is an excellent man in many respects. The great certainty he has of his being sincere, is the principal reason that he cannot doubt the truth of his sentiments: whereas sincerity, merely of itself, does not prove us to be either right or wrong. A mussulman may be sincere. Many of the Jews were sincere in crucifying Christ. Yea, a man may be sincerely wicked. Sincerity is only valuable when it is the fruit of divine teaching, and when it manifests itself in a steady adherence to the words of the apostles and prophets.

The religion of protestants is another thing which confirms him in his sentiments. And, indeed, I cannot pray that he should become such a protestant as the generality of protestants are; for of what use is it to protest against the errors of the church of Rome, if, instead of false religion, we substitute no religion, as it must be confessed

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protestants in general do? Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world, does not consist of the multitude, nor ever did; but of one here, and another there, whom he has redeemed from among men, and called by his word and spirit out of the world. Were my dear father happy enough to be acquainted with protestants of this character, he could not draw a conclusion in favour of Roman catholics.

We are to begin our journey the latter end of this month, or the beginning of May. I shall not write again before we go, unless something occur which I do not expect.

I have transcribed your letter to Miss Barnwell. I thank you, Madam, for your kind remembrance of my brother. I intend to show him the whole of our correspondence; and I desire your prayers that it may be accompanied with a divine blessing. I intend to write to you from France by the first opportunity, and am,

Dear Madam,

Most affectionately yours,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XXIX.

From Miss Barnwell to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR EUSEBIA,

OUR friend Thomas has just been here, and brought your letter to my aunt, which I shall seal, and send by the post to-day; and, as it will be almost night before he calls again, I intend to send you a hasty scrawl. And now, what shall I say to my dear friend? As she has such a desire to see her brother, I cannot importune her not to go this journey; but I hope she will take care that she be not trapanned into a nunnery. You may assure yourself, that, if you are obliged to escape in consequence of violence being offered to your inclination, Mrs. Worthington will re-

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ceive you as kindly as if she were your mother; nay, more so than if that were the case, and you were a stranger to Jesus Christ.

What you heard about my mother's loss at play is but too true. My father and she have been at home these three days. She comforts herself by saying, that she thinks she understands cards as well as most people, but no one has always luck alike; and the worse luck now, the better another time. My father said some time past, that when he was young, he had often played deeply himself; but that he generally found cause to repent it. To this my mother replied, that she abhorred playing for paltry sums, because there was no chance then of gaining any thing: besides, she could not bear any thing that was mean and low-lived.

I, who know my father much better than she does, can perceive he is chagrined, and truly not without reason; for what she has laid out in lace, ruffles, head-dresses, gowns, and aprons, since she has been married, is amazing. Though my father has a pretty estate, yet, as he keeps what is called a noble house, he has always spent his income; so that I cannot say but I have been a little uneasy lest he should be brought to poverty. He has loved me, though he slights me now: it would grieve me, therefore, to see it, because I know how unable he would be to bear it.

In reading what my aunt has written on the subject of temperance, I reflected with pleasure, that it will diminish our anxiety about what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed, when we know how little will supply our real wants. In the present age an expensive way of living almost universally prevails; it is as if every one strove in dress, in high living, and in furniture, to exceed his neighbour. When Christians are carried away by this torrent, they are not only guilty of a sinful compliance with the manners of the world, but they pierce themselves through with many sorrows. In order to acquire the means of supporting

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this vain expense, either an immoderate portion of their time is occupied, and their minds are devoured by corroding cares; or they engage in undertakings too great for their capital, bring themselves to ruin, and cause religion to be evil spoken of on their account. Contentment with mean food and clothing either prevents, or diminishes anxiety; bears up the mind against fear of loss; and keeps it from immoderate sorrow when losses are sustained. When I consider these things, I envy the simplicity of the patriarchal age.

If you have time and opportunity, any thing which drops from the pen of my Eusebia will exceedingly gratify her Miranda. I know I need say no more, if there be a possibility.

If your brother should inquire about his old playfellow, pray give my kind respects to him. I shall not cease to pray for your safe and speedy return.

Since I wrote the above, Mr. Henry Clifford called and dined with us; and he is at our house now. His principal conversation has been about what he calls the folly of his son; who, he says, before he went to Ireland, was always either in his closet, or walking alone in the fields. My father said, he believed half the world would go mad. There is a time, added he, for all things. Undoubtedly people ought to be religious; that is, they ought to go to church, once at least, on a Sunday, unless any thing extraordinary prevent. The better sort ought to do so, if it were only to set an example to the lower class, who might in a great measure be kept from poaching, if they could be induced to attend divine service.

Mr. Clifford was of opinion, that preaching had never done any good to the morals of mankind, and that the whipping post and the pillory were the best instructors. Pray what is your opinion, Miss Barnwell? cried he.

I replied, that rewards and punishments were certainly powerful stimulants to action; but that even whipping-posts and pillories would have but little effect, if people did not believe there were any such things. This is the rea-

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on, continued I, that so little regard is paid to the promises and threatenings in the word of God. Men are willing to persuade themselves that they are without foundation.

I always took you for a reasonable girl, said Mr. Clifford. Now tell me seriously, Miranda, whether you can believe that a good and gracious Being, as every one supposes God to be, can have the heart to burn poor creatures in a furnace of fire, as hot as a baker's oven, during a long eternity, for petty offences committed in the space of sixty or seventy years? The crimes and the punishment bear no proportion to each other; so that I do not wonder nobody believes them. Such accounts do violence to reason.

Permit me, Sir, to say, replied I, that you err, not knowing the Scriptures. The wicked will indeed be destroyed, with an everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord; which destruction is compared to unquenchable fire, because God will never be reconciled to them. But the whole of divine revelation shows, that sinners will be punished with few or many stripes, in an exact proportion to their sins. You call the aggravated rebellions of men against their maker, petty offences. But if you, Sir, should be unhappy enough to bear the just punishment of your transgressions, which I fear will be the case, you may then entertain different thoughts concerning your crimes.

Do you seriously then believe, cried he, several of the tales related in the Old Testament, such as Samson's carrying the gates of Gaza, and throwing down a temple of the Philistines?

I will answer this question, Sir, replied I, by asking you another. Can you conceive in what manner the eye informs the soul of the colour and figure of bodies at a great distance, and of the beauties of creation around us; or how the ear was so exquisitely contrived, as to distinguish ten thousand different vibrations of air from each other? Can you tell me who poised the earth so exactly as to make it hang upon nothing; and also who put it in motion, and continued that motion with such regularity for nearly six

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thousand years? Nay, Sir, if you can tell me who enabled you to lift a straw, I will tell you who enabled Samson to carry the gates of Gaza, and to throw down the temple of Dagon. Know, Sir, that almost every thing under the Old Testament dispensation was intended to point out the Messiah to the Jews, and to confirm the faith of the New-Testament church. Samson was a Nazarite, or one dedicated to the service of God from his birth; and was continually at war with the enemies of God's people, like him of whom he was the type; he therefore did nothing more to the gates of Gaza, than the Redeemer has done to the gates of hell. If you ask by what means this and other things were effected; I answer, by the power of God. If you say it was very wonderful, I say so too; yet not more wonderful than the sun's rising this morning. But this last wonder has been so often repeated, that people cease to wonder.

Here my father cried out, that he had heard so much of this kind of stuff, that he was surfeited. It is a pity, said my mother, but that Miss Barnwell had worn men's clothes, like the Chevalier d'Eon; she would have made an excellent soldier of the black regiment. This pitiful witticism produced a general laugh. Mr. Clifford said, he supposed his booby was of my way of thinking. But if you were to change your mind, Miranda, added he, I believe it would be too late for you to think of being my daughter. By some hints which he has now and then dropped, he seems to be over head and ears in love with a lady whom you know. According to him, Eusebia Neville has so many perfections, that none are left for the rest of her sex.—We do not know, my dearest friend, what is the design of Providence. Mr. Charles Clifford, peradventure, is raised up by the wise Disposer of all events to be a blessing to my friend. I sincerely pray, both for his own sake and yours, that that may be the case.

Our friend Thomas tells me you look very pale and thin, which I am exceedingly sorry to hear; as the loss of

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so excellent a friend would be a severe stroke to me, though she, I doubt not, would be an infinite gainer.

I am, my dear Eusebia,
Most sincerely yours,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XXX.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR MIRANDA,

OUR friend Thomas found an opportunity to give me your letter the day after he received it; but I have been so much employed in transcribing, in packing up my clothes, and in attending to other matters, that I have scarcely time to write to you before we set off. I entreat my friend to unite her prayers with mine that I may be kindly received by my brother. But I have learned to draw small expectations from that, or indeed from any other quarter. My hopes are entirely placed on him who can make the wolf dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid.

To-morrow, with the divine permission, we shall begin our journey. There will be only my father, Signior Albino, and myself, beside the footman. My sister has been very poorly with a cold for this week past, and the journey would have been put off a little time on her account; but she desired it might not, as she should hear how her brother did, with which she should endeavour to satisfy herself. She also told my father, that she dreaded crossing the sea, and the more so as the time approached. I am not sorry my sister does not go; for I am obliged to confess, that she has taken every method to show her unkindness to me, on account of my heresy, as she calls it. This has grieved me very much, it being a dreadful thing to

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persecute the servants of Christ. We may well say concerning such, that they know not what they do. It is a hard matter to make war with him out of whose mouth goes a two-edged sword. It is indeed good to be zealous; but how necessary is it to take care that our zeal be regulated by knowledge.

You may depend upon hearing from me as soon as possible. I shall direct my letters to Mrs. Worthington; but you must not expect them to be very long. I am not afraid to cross the water. I consider that there is an appointed time to man upon earth, and that his days are like the days of a hireling. Whether the transition from time to eternity take place by sea or land, is in my esteem a matter of small importance.

You would wonder if I were to take no notice of what you said about Mr. Charles Clifford. I can only observe, that, if he is really become a Christian, I am exceedingly glad for his sake. My mind is too much employed about other things to think of marrying or being given in marriage.

It would have given me singular pleasure to see my dear Miranda before I undertook this long journey: but as I cannot obtain that satisfaction without giving my friends uneasiness, it may be prudent to defer it to some happier period. Before you receive this, I shall, if God permit, be on the road to St. Omer's.

Commending you to the Father of mercies, I am, with sincere respect,

My dear friend,

Yours most affectionately,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

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LETTER XXXI.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

OUR dear Eusebia set off on Monday last to see her brother, in the company of her father, Signior Albino, and the footman. I am under no apprehension that they will be able to persuade her to take the veil; and with regard to force, I am persuaded her father is a person of too much honour and veracity to think of breaking his word.

The day after she set off, a letter was brought me by Thomas Livingstone. I was walking in the closes which border on the lane leading towards the Abbey, and saw the good man through the hedge, mounted on his ass, and coming toward the Hall. I called to him, and found, as I expected, that he had a letter for me.

Ah, Thomas, cried I, is it not some mortification to you, who have seen better days, or at least more affluent, to ride on an animal which the world have agreed to account disreputable?

Miss, replied he, stroking the neck of his beast, a Christian would seldom err, if, in most things, he determined to go counter to the judgment of the multitude. For my part, I esteem the lion, the elephant, the horse, and even the ox, less honourable than the despised ass. The ass has been ennobled beyond all other creatures by him who is the fountain of honour. The Lord of glory made his public entry into his kingdom here below upon this humble animal. He is on this account esteemed by Christians to be superior in dignity to the whole brute creation besides, notwithstanding he is despised by mankind in general; who, aspiring after grand and magnificent things, are not disposed to take the yoke, and to follow the example of the lowly Jesus.

Well, Thomas, said I, but you would have some regard paid to decorum. If, for instance, you were in a state of

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influence, you would rather be ashamed of your honest companion, would you not?

I shall never have the trial, Miss, answered he; but certainly were I capable of being affected with shame on such an account, I should have just reason to be ashamed. No, I hope I shall never think it beneath me to ride upon the same kind of creature which my Lord and master rode upon. With regard to the decorum you speak of, Christians ought to remember that the customs of the people are vain. The fashionable and extravagant vices of the day are exceedingly alarming; and if the destruction of Sodom was owing to pride, idleness, and fulness of bread, we have reason to believe that the same cause will produce the same effect in this kingdom. Besides, you will find, my dear friend, that mankind in general will as much despise those whom the Redeemer chooses out of the world, as they possibly can despise the beast he rode on. Christians are no more scandalized at the ass on which he rode, than at the manger which first received him, the cross on which he expired, or his subsisting on the alms of his pious followers. We shall be happy in proportion as our minds are brought to be meek and lowly, and to resemble the Lamb of God. The proud man is a self-tormentor. If he think himself overlooked, or disregarded, it is more than he can bear. But the Christian expects no better treatment: and when he is despised, and his name is cast out as evil, for the sake of Jesus, he bears it patiently, and even joyfully, knowing that his reward is great in heaven.

I told my kind instructor, that I approved of all he had said. And, indeed, my dear aunt, if you knew but half the unkind treatment I have met with, you would not think these observations improperly timed. I was loath to part with Thomas; for how different is his conversation from that which I hear at home, where I am afraid the most High is never thought of from one week's end to another, nor mentioned except in a vain and too frequently in a blasphemous manner.

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I have been hesitating whether I had best tell my mind, that, for these four days past, I have lived in the kitchen with the servants, and have not been suffered to come into my father's presence. I expect that he will never suffer me to come near him any more.

I have already told you, that I have frequently had an opportunity of hearing Mr. Lowe. Mr. Law heard of it, and told my father that he was surprised at his letting me associate with such poor people. He came home exceedingly angry, and told me that he never thought he should bring up a child to be guilty of any thing so mean. He added that he was going to make his will that afternoon, and, unless I promised never to enter a meeting again, would leave me only a shilling; and that if I continued to put myself upon a level with such a rabble, I must not think of being his companion; for he knew his rank and station in life better than to be an associate of those who had no virtuous pride, and who manifested a meanness of spirit which placed them beneath contempt.

I could not speak for weeping. My father exclaimed two or three times, Well, Madam, am I to expect an answer? At this moment Mrs. Barnwell came in, and said, that she always thought obedience to parents was a capital article of religion. Indeed, Madam, I can perceive that she does every thing in a covert manner to set my father against me. I replied, that my father was sufficiently angry without her saying any thing to enrage him. Upon this she flew into a passion, and said that Mr. Barnwell was too good natured by half; that he had humoured me till I was headstrong; that she would care no more about me; and that he must take it for his pains. This exasperated him still more; and he took an oath, that, unless I would that minute promise that I would never enter a meeting again, I should never eat nor drink any more in his presence, nor presume to come into his company. I begged him to consider, that his requiring such a promise was laying me under a necessity of disobeying him. I understand you, Madam, said he; I beg you to walk down

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among the servants; they are much too good company for such as you. As soon as my father had said this, I was taken by the arm and put out of the parlour, and the door was clapped upon me. I went up into my study and wept; but my grief was least of all for myself. My dear parent thinks he is doing right: my knowledge that he does wrong is that which troubles me.

I went down toward evening, and drank tea with the maids, who could not help weeping for me. Nancy White was so overcome with grief that she wept aloud; nor could she for a great while be pacified. The feelings of the lower class of mankind are, I believe, in general, more tender than people in a higher station imagine; and I assure you, Madam, the artless, sympathetic friendship of these poor girls was a welcome alleviation of my grief. But, above all, the consolation I received while I was before the throne of grace I am unable to express.

I earnestly pray that these things may not be laid to the charge of my dear parent, who knows not what he is doing. Before I went to the meeting I had no comfort. Then my acting in a different manner from what I had been wont to do was an unpardonable crime. Therefore I entreated my father before I went to hear Mr. Lowe, that he would permit me to go and live with you. I further said, that I should think it no hardship to become a servant, or to do any thing that my conscience would allow, if it would give him content. To this he replied, that he would agree to my last proposal with all his heart, were not his own honour concerned, seeing I was a beggar in nature, and originally designed for nothing better than servitude.

I should not, for my parent's sake, have disclosed these particulars even to you. But this last step will publish every thing to the world, at whose bar I shall be condemned: nor does this displease me; for I do not desire to be justified at the expense of my father. If God, my conscience, and you, Madam, approve of what I do, it is enough. Let not my dear aunt trouble herself. I do not

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account these strange things. I have inclosed the letter of our friend, and my companion in affliction, and am,

Dear Madam,

Your dutiful niece,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XXXII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I HAVE received a letter from our excellent friend, which I shall immediately transmit to you. You will rejoice with me to hear that she arrived safe at St. Omer's; and your joy will be greatly increased by the pleasing information that her brother is a protestant. In what a wonderful and sovereign manner does our heavenly Father dispense his favours! Mr. Neville sent his son into a popish country, that there might be no possibility of his being poisoned with heretical notions, as he terms the pure gospel of Christ: but it is impossible to counteract the will of Him, who came to seek as well as to save that which was lost.

Your narration, my dear child, of the cruel treatment which you have received, has given me much uneasiness. It is no more, however, than we had reason to expect. The kingdom of heaven must be entered through great tribulation. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are enemies with which a Christian is never at peace. We must, therefore, put on the armour of God, and fight the good fight of faith to the end of our course.

You and I, Miranda, have no reason to complain. We might have been called to resist unto blood, striving against sin. Besides, you are always welcome to partake with me,—I was going to say of my little pittance; but, I thank God, more than enough remains for you, and my-

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self, and our dear Eusebia, if Providence should place her under my protection.

I received much pleasure from your account of Thomas and his ass. A humble mind is of itself a portion; for it teaches its possessors to be content in the lowest stations. A Christian cannot think himself ignobly mounted, if he ride as well as his divine master. Nor do I doubt but the cottage of your friend pleases him, from the consideration that it is as good as the stable which received the Lord of glory. The world, and the things of the world, are the one thing needful with worldly men. Riches, honour, sumptuous houses, gay clothes, and costly viands, afford them all their happiness; and a poor happiness it is.—When we know the value of the divine favour, how many things are there that we can do without! It is more than probable, my child, that a very great share of the things of time will never be your portion: but this you ought to consider as a matter of small importance. The fewer talents of this kind are committed to your trust, for the fewer you will be accountable. If the children of God, who are rich in this world, were sufficiently to consider that the time is coming when they must give an account of their stewardship, it would somewhat abate their eagerness in accumulating transitory trifles. I can only add, my dear niece, that I continue

Your affectionate aunt,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XXXIII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

THROUGH the kind providence of God my friends and I arrived at St. Omer's yesterday about noon. How thankful ought I to be to the Father of mercies for the

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goodness with which he has followed me from my birth to this moment.

The pleasure I promised myself from seeing my dear brother was mixed with apprehension that he would reproach me on account of my supposed heresy; but I have been happily and unexpectedly disappointed. Could you have thought that my brother would come to the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ in the French Netherlands? Yet such is the happy case: happy for me; but infinitely more so for him. With what joy did I hear him speak the first time we were by ourselves! The exuberant pleasure deprived me of speech; and I could only express my delight by the tears which I shed while he pressed me to his bosom.

He observed, it would not be prudent to disclose his being a protestant, till we arrived in England; and that in the meantime he would act the part of a mediator, as far as he could do it with propriety.

I mentioned my father's promise not to force me into a convent.

Ah, my dear sister, cried he, don't you recollect that no faith is to be kept with heretics to the prejudice of the church?

I perceive he is fearful that I shall meet with foul play. But, as he will undoubtedly be in the secret if any thing of that kind shall be attempted, I hope, with the divine blessing, to be preserved.

When I intimated my surprise at his being able to keep it a secret so long (for he has been a protestant more than a twelvemonth) he replied, that apparently to have no religion was a trifling sin in a catholic country; and that his few acquaintance supposed this to be his case. As they knew he was fond of botany, they imagined he spent all the time he could spare from his studies in cultivating that pleasing science. And indeed it was in one of his botanical excursions that he providentially met with a person, in whose commendation he cannot sufficiently express himself. All that I at present know of him is, that he lives at

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Cassel; and that in him are united the Christian, the friend, the scholar, and the gentleman. But I must leave for a while this pleasing subject, as Miss Barnwell made me promise to give her a narrative of my voyage.

On Tuesday, the seventh of May, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, we embarked at Gravesend, on board the Industry, Captain Williams, bound for Calais. As we sailed down the river, which in this part widens very rapidly, a seafaring gentleman endeavoured to make the time pass agreeably by telling diverting stories, in which manner he said they spend many of their leisure hours in long voyages. This is a true picture of the world, who, as they sail down the stream of time, take every method to shorten the precious moments, till the voyage of life is over.

In the afternoon we met a fishing vessel, that told our captain it was blowing weather at sea; on which account, in the evening, he cast anchor at Holy-haven. The next morning, the wind continuing rough, I began to be sick; nor were my father and Signior Albino much better. However, I kept above deck, and was pleased with the sight of numerous vessels. The sea-gulls also cleaving the air, and the porpoises sporting in the water, afforded me an entertainment as agreeable as it was new. How great is that Being who has confined this turbulent element, this amazing world of waters, as with bars and doors, and has said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further. The ocean is truly a majestic and awful part of the works of God. How happy to have Him for our Father, who measureth the waters in the hollow of his hand! Methinks seafaring people, above all others, should live in the constant view of eternity; since the starting of a plank, or a thousand unforeseen accidents, may in one moment usher them into the world of spirits. I pray for myself, and for every other servant of Jesus, that we may never spend one day in such a manner as would give us a reluctance to have it for our dying day. It becomes us to be alarmed, lest we should be off our watch and in a slumbering disposition when our Lord shall come. They who are not habitually

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preparing to receive him, cannot expect to hear the midnight cry with composure, even if they are among those who will be permitted to enter with the Bridegroom, and to partake of the marriage-supper.

On Wednesday nothing important occurred. Upon the approach of night the wind died away, and we cast anchor opposite to Kingsgate on the Isle of Thanet. I was upon deck early enough next morning to see the sun rise from his watery bed. The heavens were serene: there was a gentle breeze; and every thing appeared awfully grand, especially to me, who had not before seen this reservoir of waters. Presently we beheld the stupendous cliffs of Dover, which serve as a barrier to the boisterous element. We stretched over to Calais, where we arrived about eleven o'clock. Before we could set our feet on shore, we were accosted by waiters belonging to the inns, who each extolled their different houses. But our captain, who was exceedingly civil, having recommended to us the Bras d'Or, we had previously concluded to put up at that inn.

We had not been long in our room, before a capuchin-friar, who wore sandals, and was without stockings, entered, and presented us with a paper written in bad English, purporting that his monastery, having neither lands nor livings, subsisted on the charity of the well-disposed. The friar, who had no reason to be displeased with his reception, took us to see his monastery. After locking us in, he conducted us through several rooms, in which were various paintings, either of Scripture history, or of persons of his order. In the sacristy were a crucifix adorned with jewels, a golden chalice, and many other baubles. The father easily perceived me to be a heretic, by my taking little or no notice of his relics and other trumpery. He looked at me, whispered to father Albino, and shrugged up his shoulders. After having shown us the garden belonging to his monastery, which contained nothing worth describing, he let us through the garden-gate into the parade, where the soldiers were exercising.

Calais is a large town, with tolerably good streets. But

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I shall not attempt to describe a place which has already been described by many others much more able to do it than myself. We stopped all night, and set out in the morning for St. Omer's, where we arrived about noon. The country through which we passed was unenclosed; yet all of it was under culture, which surprised me. The crops in general were good, and consisted chiefly of wheat, barley, and coleseed; the last of which composes at least one third of the whole, and is now in flower. I felt a pleasing sensation when we came to the avenue which leads into St. Omer's, that being the place where my brother told us in his letter that he spent many of his leisure hours. I looked for him in vain; but a few minutes brought us to our inn, the Poste Royalle.

With this account of my journey I must finish my letter. I cannot describe the joy of my father at the sight of his son after two years' absence. My own was not less sincere; though the supposed difference in our sentiments abated the satisfaction I should otherwise have received from meeting with so dear a friend. How happy was my disappointment. He was exceedingly glad to hear that the gay and sprightly Miss Darnwell was a pilgrim to the heavenly city; and he desired me to give his kind regards to my excellent friend, and to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, among whom he did not forget Mrs. Worthington nor our friend Livingstone and his wife. I unite with him in the best wishes for the happiness of all my friends, and continue,

Dear Madam,

Yours most sincerely,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

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LETTER XXXIV.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

THE day after my receipt of your kind letter, enclosing one from our dear Eusebia, for the contents of which we have reason to adore the kind providence of God, one of Mr. Neville's men came to our house with a letter for me from Miss Neville, and brought a single horse chaise with him. The letter was to let me know she was very unwell, and to beg I would come over in the chaise she had sent, or, if I could not come directly, that I would let the man wait till I could. I was surprised. She and I had been as intimate as sisters, and a similarity of temper had rendered us very agreeable to each other. But I thought that my corresponding with her sister was a sin never to be forgiven.

I should have first told you, Madam, that about a week past Mr. Friend and his wife and daughter came to pay us a visit. I say us, as if I were a part of the family, which is hardly the case. My mother sent word that I might come up into the parlour as usual. Upon receiving this message my resentment began to arise, it being obvious she was afraid it should be known by Mr. Friend and his family in what manner I was treated. But I immediately perceived it was a temptation of Satan. Pride, thought I, does not become a servant of Jesus. I therefore put on as cheerful an appearance as I could, and went up stairs to Mrs. Friend and her daughter, Mr. Friend being gone to the river to my father, who was fishing.

When my father came home, he took no notice of my being in the parlour; and after our visitors were gone, I thought it would be imprudent to return to the kitchen, unless I was ordered to do so: therefore I continued where I was. Mrs. Barnwell told one of the maids, that she did

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not think I would have come up, but she supposed I was pretty well humbled.

On receiving Miss Neville's letter, I gave it to my father, and asked him what his pleasure was. My pleasure, girl? said he, pray do as you have done hitherto; that is, what you please.

I have never, Sir, replied I, to my knowledge, disobeyed you in my life, and I trust never shall, except where my soul would be endangered by my compliance.

My father laughed and said he was a Turk in this respect: he scarcely thought a woman had any soul. However, continued he, as Miss Neville has sent for you, and the family is out, I would advise you to go. I thanked him, and set off in less than an hour.

All the way I went I puzzled myself to no purpose in thinking what Miss Neville could want me for. When I arrived in the court-yard, she came out, and received me very kindly; but I perceived that her eyes were red with weeping. It immediately came into my mind that my dear Eusebia was dead, and I hastily asked her if that was not the case. She fell upon my neck and wept, and said, as soon as she could speak, O no, my dear sister is alive, and I thank God she is: it is I who am dead.

We went into the little parlour. I could not tell what to think. I was apprehensive that she was disordered in her senses. She sat down by me, and took hold of my hand. Oh my dear friend, said she, what must I do? I fear the earth will open and swallow me up. What is the matter Miss Neville? said I, pray tell me; and if I can alleviate your misery, nothing shall be wanting that I can do. O no, cried she, I fear you can do me no good. I have sinned against God; I have injured my dear sister. O Miranda, she and you will be angels in heaven, praising God, when I shall be howling in hell!

I was exceedingly affected, and remembered the wormwood and the gall. Well may the wise man say, *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?* When the arrows of the Almighty wound

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a sinner, no one can allay the anguish but the great Physician of souls.

I endeavoured to pacify her, by showing that the blood of Jesus Christ is sufficient to cleanse from all sin; and that it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that he came into the world to save sinners, of whom the apostle Paul, who had been the bloody persecutor of Christ in his followers, styled himself the chief. Her sin in persecuting her sister, I told her, was indeed exceedingly heinous. Yes, she said, it was exactly parallel to Cain's persecuting Abel. If she had been suffered to proceed, I replied, it undoubtedly would have been so; but I hoped, that, as Ananias was sent to Saul for good, and Peter to Cornelius, so her sending for me was of God. I added, that my susprise and my joy were equally great, to find her sentiments so different from what they had been; and that as the Lord had stopped her in her career as he did Saul, I hoped she, like him, would be a monument of divine mercy.

I then desired her to tell me how this great change had been effected.

My dear sister, replied she, left all the letters which had passed between Mrs. Worthington, and you, and herself, together with the rough draughts of her own letters, tied together, in her closet, and did not take the key with her. As soon as I saw them, I determined to read them carefully, and to note down every error, and write an answer to it, which I thought would employ my leisure hours in my father's absence. I had not read many letters before I perceived, that in persecuting my sister, I had been persecuting an angel of God. The spirit that breathed in every line, convinced me that I had known nothing of Christianity but the name; and that I no more resembled the Son of God, than his murderers did. I determined to read them through; in doing which I found that the sentiments of Mrs. Worthington and my sister and you were not only exactly alike, but that God had given you the gentleness and meekness of lambs, while I had the fierceness and

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cruelty of a wolf. Besides, after reading your correspondence, I had no doubt but it was the will of God, that Christians should learn their religion from the Scriptures, to which divine volumes I had been too great a stranger.

I told Miss Neville that this was not to be wondered at; that it was not merely the case with the members of the church of Rome, but also with the generality of protestants, all unbelievers being as ignorant of the truth as she, and frequently possessing as much enmity against the children of God as she had manifested toward her sister.—Indeed, madam, she feels so much compunction on account of her guilt, that I find it necessary to console her with the precious declarations of mercy made to sinners in the gospel, lest she should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

On reading her sister's letter, she said she was glad that her brother had left a religion which encouraged its members to propagate it by fire and sword. O Miranda, added she, how infatuated, how blind have I been! Can any proposition be plainer than this, that to be a Christian is to be like Christ; to have the same spirit and disposition with him; to embrace those truths which he delivered; and to be obedient to all his commands? I should imagine, did I not know the contrary by sad experience, that no one could be so ignorant as to suppose that the merciful Redeemer permitted his followers to injure any person either in word or deed.

I replied, that she was undoubtedly right; and that although God did indeed compel sinners to come in that his house might be filled, it was not the compulsion of racks and gibbets. They are compelled, said I, by his Spirit and truth, to lay down their arms with which they fought against him, and to become his willing people, as I hope, my dear Maria, is now your own case.

Ah, Miss Barnwell, cried she, weeping, you have spoken many consoling things concerning the mercy of God, and I believe they are true, and that all those will receive the heavenly inheritance for whom it was intended: but my sins are so numerous and so aggravated, that I of all the

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persons in the world have the least reason to believe myself one of the elect.

That you are one of the elect, replied I, is what you are not commanded to believe, it not being the subject of Revelation. You are exhorted to believe that which is true, whether you believe it or not, namely, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and the only Saviour of sinners.

I was convinced, cried she, before I had finished reading Mrs. Worthington's and your correspondence with my sister, that nothing can save a guilty sinner but the obedience and death of the Son of God; and that penances and pilgrimages, pardons and indulgences, the merit of good works, and every other foundation of hope, were false refuges.

You saw them in their proper colours, replied I. And protestants are no more at a loss than catholics in substituting something to depend upon in the room of the perfect work of the Son of God. How specious soever this something may seem, its intrinsic value is no greater than that of popish pardons and pilgrimages. The songs of the redeemed will be addressed to him that loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood. They will with one consent lay their crowns at his feet, and give him the honour of his achievements. To rob the Redeemer of his glory, or to weaken our obligations to love him, is not our interest; since to love God perfectly is that which will constitute the happiness of angels and saints to all eternity. The angels who kept their first estate will adore him who graciously preserved them from the apostacy of Satan, and his companions in rebellion; and redeemed men will have to praise him for an act of kindness, in its nature somewhat similar, but of much greater magnitude. You tell me, Miss Neville, that you are convinced of this momentous truth, and yet fear you are not one of the elect. If you sincerely believe the things related by the apostles concerning the Son of God, which by way of eminence are called the truth, your fears are now as groundless as your

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hopes were before presumptuous. The promises of the gospel, though not made to this or that person by name, are made to all who believe what God has revealed concerning his Son.

Very true, answered she: but of those who received the seed of the word, there was only one kind that continued in the truth and brought forth fruit. I replied, that this parable was spoken by our Saviour, that his children might be cautious, lest, a promise being left them of entering into his rest, any of them should even so much as seem to come short of it; and also to remind us that though we are saved by mere mercy, yet it is in such a way as will not dispense with our labouring to make our calling and election sure, or with keeping our bodies under lest we should be disapproved.

My friend, said she, I beg you will pray for me, that I may lie at the footstool of the Redeemer, from which place I desire never more to remove. The displeasure of my father, I suppose, will be exceedingly great. I shall not wonder if he turn me and my dear brother and sister out of doors, and sell off all, and go to live in a catholic country with Signior Albino. But these are little things. Oh, how little, when compared with the loss of the divine favour! The sense I have already had of the divine displeasure is such, that I am convinced no evil will bear to be compared with the wrath of an offended God.

Since I wrote the [illegible] Miss Neville, at my request, sent for our friend Thomas Livingston, to whom the change which had taken place in her gave very great joy. The good man answered every question she put to him very pertinently. The principal were concerning election, and the unpardonable sin, which she feared she had committed. Miss Neville unites in kind respects to you, with,

Dear Madam,
Your dutiful and
Affectionate Niece,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

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LETTER XXXV.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Neville.

MY DEAR MISS NEVILLE,

I HAVE received a letter from my niece, which was as welcome as it was unexpected. I may truly say concerning you, as the Lord said concerning Jerusalem by the prophet Zechariah, *Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?* The conversion of one sinner is of much greater importance than the temporal concerns of all the empires and kingdoms which have existed since the world began; for, notwithstanding many thousands of millions of individuals are comprehended in this account, yet were their number ten thousand times increased, their temporal happiness or misery would bear no proportion to the eternal happiness or misery of one of the descendants of Adam. To be delivered from the wrath to come, is a thought which must overwhelm the capacities of the cherubim and seraphim, who behold the face of the infinite I AM. But the very little they know is more than sufficient to fill that vast and happy assembly with joy at the conversion of a sinner.

The kingdom of Satan is a kingdom of error; and all his subjects, at the very time they think themselves the most wise, are immersed in ignorance and folly. The minds of them who believe not are blinded by the god of this world. In bringing us to a right mind, God shines upon us with the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, and enlightens the eyes of our understanding: he causes us to discern those things to which we were before strangers, and to love those things which we before hated. I hope that this divine change has taken place in you; that you are now convinced that you are a perishing sinner; and that you have fled for refuge to Christ as the only Saviour. The state of man by nature, and salvation by Jesus Christ, are the leading topics in the correspondence between your sister, my niece, and myself. And I wish you ever to re-

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member, that a morality, of which a right view of these things is not the foundation, is a morality of which the love of God makes no part. To know the Redeemer; to be acquainted with his person, the work he came to finish, and God's well-pleasedness in him, is a knowledge big with every blessing. It is that by which we are transformed into the divine image. It produces a pure morality, of which the love of God is the basis, and with which eternal life is inseparably and very wisely connected. Knowledge and faith are twins: they are born together, and can never be separated. If God therefore has given you an understanding to know him that is true, you may infer with the apostle that you are in him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ.

I wish you, my dear young lady, to consider this well. It is a common device of Satan to raise a mist before the eyes of those who have escaped out of his kingdom, and to persuade them that they are not travelling in the road to Zion. He is a lying spirit, and the author both of vain confidence and of unreasonable fear. God will not let you pursue your journey to the new Jerusalem, without giving you proofs that he has adopted you into his family and that he has given you a right to enter into that glorious city. Jesus Christ, it is true, is ascended into heaven to prepare mansions for his people; but he has not left them orphans. The Spirit of God is given to abide with his church for ever; and he now beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, by making us partakers of that peace and joy, which the world can no more understand by any description, than a man born blind could understand a lecture on light and colours. To which I will add, that if God has adopted you into his family, he has given you a childlike disposition; you will be continually going to him as to your parent; and "My Father," and "My God," will afford you more comfort than all the words in our language besides. They who have received this happy privilege, will say with Saul after Jesus had met him, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* The

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direction to be given to such is plain: let them search the sacred epistles, and learn in what manner the apostles exhorted their converts to walk so as to please God. If you follow the footsteps of those who are gone to glory, in all holy obedience, you will thereby not only greatly honour God, but also demonstrate that your knowledge is real, your faith unfeigned, and your joy such as the world can neither give nor take away.

Your fear that you have committed the unpardonable sin is, I am convinced, without foundation. This sin is called, by way of eminence, the sin against the holy Ghost, because the committers of it, after having in some measure been enlightened, and after having tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, have out of regard to some present advantage returned to their former way of life. Judas was a fearful instance of this kind, as were those Jews who could no otherwise excuse their rejection of the Messiah than by maliciously insinuating, in opposition to their consciences, that his miracles were wrought by the power of the devil. Saul the persecutor did not commit this sin; because, notwithstanding he had much malice, he had much ignorance;—nor Peter, when he denied his master; for although he had great light, yet he had no malice. It is the infinite mercy of God's children, that they are so kept by his power as never to be suffered to commit this sin. Here the wicked one toucheth them not, because they are born of God, and because his seed, or his Spirit and truth, remaineth in them. I hope that you will never be left to deny the Redeemer in any way; but above all I pray that you may never more be left to hate and despise him in his followers, since that would be the unpardonable sin now, though it was not so a fortnight past.

The doctrine of election, about which you inquired of Thomas Livingstone, is one of the deep things of God, for which he has assigned no reason but his sovereign pleasure. That it is true, not only divine revelation, almost in every page, but the universal voice of nature proclaims.

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Every creature was brought into being for the glory of him who is Lord of all. He in a sovereign manner has formed them animate and inanimate, noble or ignoble, with or without reason, as seemed good in his sight. We can assign no other cause for the creation of noxious insects, reptiles, and ravenous beasts, than that it was the pleasure of the Sovereign of heaven and earth. This reason will satisfy every one who is truly humble.

If it be asked, wherefore God permitted sin to enter into the world, and why he saves some and not others from that dire calamity? I can only answer that so it is. The reason I know no more, than why some of his creatures are toads or serpents, while others are harmless and useful. Neither can I tell why one great part of the world is immersed in paganism, another in Mahometanism, another in popish darkness, nor why the inhabitants of a fourth part, though called protestants, are as ignorant of the true God, and as destitute of a well-grounded hope of eternal life, as the former. Yet these are facts. It follows, that revelation concurs with experience in declaring, that a remnant only of Jews and Gentiles was intended to be saved; and that this remnant is composed of those only whom the Son of God redeemed from among men. If you and I, my dear child, have just ground to believe that we are part of this remnant, it becomes us to serve, to love, and to bless him who has loved us with an everlasting love, and who has distinguished us from thousands on our right hand and on our left, who were stones of the same quarry, and clay of the same pit with ourselves.

Since I wrote the above, I have received a letter from your sister, which I shall enclose. Poor dear girl, she is involved in great difficulties; but she bears up under them like one who has made the Lord her refuge. I shall every day impatiently expect her.

My kind love to my niece, and to Thomas Livingstone and his wife. I am with true respect,

Your sincere friend,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

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LETTER XXXVI.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

THROUGH the kind providence of God, I have it in my power to say that I am yet on the right side of the walls of a convent, notwithstanding the pains which have been taken by my father and Signior Albino to gain my consent to take the veil, or at least to commence my noviciate. With the divine permission, no entreaties shall induce me to do any thing which I know to be contrary to the will of God.

The conversion of my dear brother from popery to Christianity is a great mercy to me as well as to him. I have all the happiness in his conversation that I could wish. It is a support provided for me by my heavenly Father when I most needed it.

We went yesterday to see the Abbey of St. Bertin. It is what some would call a noble structure; but if its value were estimated by its usefulness, a very little money would purchase it. It was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. We found the monks at matins, or morning prayers, if the repetition of a form of words in concert, with a loud noise, and no apparent devotion, can be so called. After we had staid a little while to see this mock-worship, our guide took us into the vestry, and showed us such quantities of rich vestments as amazed me. They were flowered with gold and silver, in a very curious manner, and with the utmost profusion. We see by this, and by every other kind of magnificence which abounds in their churches, how offensive the cross of Christ, and his poverty, are to the natural man. We were next shown the sacristy. A large pair of folding doors being opened, we beheld a quantity of useless wealth, which it would require a volume to describe. In general, it consisted of a collection

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of relics, in cases of gold ornamented with jewels, together with a great number of vessels of the same metal. The gigantic silver candlesticks, among so much other wealth, appeared but like common things. I was sorry to see my dear father and Signior Albino take so much notice of these vanities, which, as well as every thing else that these spiritual merchants have gained by trafficking in the souls of men, are doomed by the righteous judgment of God to come to nought. When my poor sister intended greatly to offend me, she used to tell me of the barns in which the heretics held their religious assemblies. But I perceive no impropriety in worshipping him in a barn, who made his public entry into his dominions in a stable. I do not like these poor, these pitiful things. Upon what baubles do we set our affections before we are possessed of the true riches!

After dinner, my father asked me how I liked the Abbey of St. Bertin. Not at all, Sir, replied I; such great wealth and splendour ill become the followers of him who had not where to lay his head.

You seem determined, young lady, said father Albino, to find fault with every thing belonging to our holy religion: otherwise you might discern, that these noble structures, costly jewels, and splendid vestments, were intended by the donors to do honour to him who is Lord of lords and King of kings.

Whatever might be the motives, Sir, answered I, of those who gave away their wealth for such vain and ostentatious purposes, since they did not do it in obedience to the command of Christ, they will not receive a reward.

Why, child, cried my father, the tabernacle of Moses, and the temple of Solomon, which were appropriated to divine worship, were as expensive and magnificent as they possibly could be made. By analogy, therefore, Christian temples ought to be as sumptuous as the circumstances of the worshippers will permit.

The tabernacle and the temple, Sir, replied I, together with the whole Jewish economy, were shadows of good

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things to come. Those places were honoured with the sensible presence of Jehovah; and were intended to prefigure the tabernacling of the Son of God here below, in the sinless body and soul which were prepared for his reception. But the best temple now is the body and soul of a Christian, which God sanctifies to be the place of his residence. Wherever a few believers are assembled in the name of Christ, he is present among them; and the place they meet in, whether a barn or a stable, an upper or a lower room, is better ornamented in God's esteem than the abbey we have now been surveying.

The jaundiced eye, cried father Albino, sees every thing yellow; and with a similar disease is that mind affected, which is prejudiced against the good ways of God by having drank of the foul and muddy streams of heresy. How could it be possible otherwise for you to prefer a barn or a stable, for the worship of God, to a solemn and stately temple? Pray, Mr. Wm. Neville, did you ever hear or read of any person that was so obstinately bent upon his own destruction as this poor deluded girl?

Father, replied he, I beg you will excuse me. I must again declare that I am determined to take no part in this controversy, because I feel myself unequal to the task you would impose upon me. If you and my honoured parent cannot silence the objections of my dear sister, how can I expect to succeed?

My father commended my brother for his wisdom and prudence; and observed, that young people, when they met with an heretical argument which they could not answer, were apt to conclude, though not very modestly, that it was unanswerable. With regard to you, my child, it had been happy for you and me too if you had never been born.

Ah, my dear friend, said father Albino, this young lady is a fearful monument of the just displeasure of God, manifested against those who give ear to lying vanities, or who in any measure depart from the faith once delivered to the saints. The common observation, that the best

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things corrupted are the worst, was never more verified than in her. An excellent understanding and a good education are perverted to the dreadful purpose of palliating heresy. And the best natural temper (with sorrow I speak it) is turned into the gall of asps; for whenever she speaks of the holy religion wherein she was educated, the most malicious heretic could never say more disrespectful things. The very temples wherein we worship the God of our fathers, though the glory of the world, are no better, if you will believe her, than the paltry conventicles of mushroom sectaries, many of whom disappear before they have been honoured with a name. The faith of the holy Roman church was spoken of with admiration throughout the world, in the time of the apostles; and like its temples, it continues firm and unmoved to the present hour; nor shall the gates of hell prevail against it.

It is my earnest wish, Eusebia, said my father, and I implore you not to refuse my request, that you will take the veil. When you are in the company of the holy sisters, I have no doubt but their gentle manners, and pious conversation, will bring you to a juster way of thinking. You will then bless me and my venerable friend for the care we have taken of your everlasting interest.

O my dear father, cried I, (falling upon my knees,) I beseech you not to ask your poor child the only thing she cannot grant. My friends may come to me; but I cannot go to them.

Indeed, young lady, said father Albino, if I were your parent, I would soon convince you that it is not so impossible as you suppose it to be. I know you rely upon his promise not to force your inclination; but I hope he will consider, that a rash promise, or even vow, is better broke than kept.

Ah, father, replied I, how oft have I heard you accuse the protestants of injustice, in supposing that catholics think a breach of faith with heretics no sin.

And I still accuse them, interrupted he angrily; but this is a different case. The promise of my friend that he

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would not compel you to renounce your errors, was virtually a promise to become an accomplice in your guilt. Moreover, if we are commanded to compel persons to come in, that Christ's house may be filled, ought we not to compel those to come back who have strayed from the good ways of God? If your father had promised to murder you, it would not be his duty to keep his promise; but he would act infinitely worse, if he were to keep his promise of letting you go to hell without interruption.

Indeed, Eusebia, said my father, you must renounce your errors, or submit to take the veil. I did not act rightly when I promised to be the cause of your ruin. I have had a long conversation with my friend upon this subject, and am convinced that no engagements to break the laws of Christ can be binding. I must do myself the justice, however, to declare, that, when I promised not to force your inclination, I intended to keep my word. But as the apostles could do nothing against the truth, but for the truth; so no good catholic can bind himself, either to do any harm to the faith and church of Christ, or to omit doing them all the service in his power.

I was so terrified when I heard this reasoning, that it was with difficulty I kept from swooning. My dear brother, perceiving my disorder, put his arm round my neck, and besought my father not to carry matters to such an extremity, or at least to allow me time for consideration.

Alas, my son, cried Signior Albino, you cannot conceive the indulgence she has already had. Yet I dare say her father will have no objection to grant her any reasonable time to retract her errors, provided she will promise to employ that time in endeavouring to reconcile herself to the church, which like a tender parent, is willing to receive returning prodigals. To this my father assented, desiring me also to consider, that they had nothing in view, nor could have, but the glory of God, and the good of my precious soul.

How sad a thing it is to have a conscience misinformed. This was the case of those who murdered the Lord of

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glory; and it was once the opinion of Paul, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. A Christian makes the Scriptures the entire rule of his faith and practice. The Jews could not have crucified the Messiah, unless they had first made the word of God of no effect through their traditions: and to this source must be imputed all the bloodshed and murders which have been perpetrated in the name of the meek and lowly Jesus.

I have this day conversed with my father, and pleaded his promise, but without effect. His conscience is under the direction of the priest, who tells him that no promise can be binding which is made to the prejudice of religion. And indeed I remember, that when a protestant gentleman was once telling father Albino that the council of Constance had decreed that no faith was to be kept with heretics, he replied, that the council was misrepresented; for that, on account of a safe conduct being granted by the emperor to that arch-heretic Huss, it had decreed, not that no faith was to be kept with heretics, but that no safe conduct ought to be of any prejudice to the catholic religion. This excuse I remember was not satisfactory to me; since it was then my opinion, as much as it is now, that no consideration whatsoever should make us deviate from truth and justice.

I am very sorry that my father has been persuaded to break his promise, for his own sake; for, as to myself, I trust that, through the kind providence of God, I shall be enabled to defeat the counsels which are taken against me. I hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing you at Islington, unless my dear parent should alter his resolution, which I have no reason to expect. I frequently think that but little food is requisite for the preservation of life. I am the worst off with respect to clothes, having few that will suit my mean condition: but I have a trifling sum of money, which is a great mercy. I shall not show my brother this letter, being determined not to inform him how I intend to extricate myself out of my present difficulties. He is truly all I could wish in so near and dear a relation:

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but I am determined not to involve him in my misfortunes. Besides, such a double shock might be more than my dear parent could bear.

I am, with the best respects to you and my other kind friends,

Dear Madam,
Yours very sincerely,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XXXVII.

From Miss Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE received your kind letter, enclosing one from my excellent but much injured sister; injured by no one more than by myself. My mind is so much agitated, that nothing less than the obligations which I and my dear sister are under to Mrs. Worthington could have made me put pen to paper. I thank you for your good wishes and seasonable instruction, and entreat your prayers that I may never turn my back on the good ways of God. How much have I been mistaken! I pity and pray for my dear parent and Signior Albino, who know not what they are doing.

It would give me great pleasure, Madam, to hear that my dear sister were under your friendly roof. As it is her intention to make an attempt to escape, the moments will appear to me very tedious till I shall hear of her having effected her purpose. With regard to myself and my dear brother, we have undoubtedly much to fear, if we carry our views no further than to a furious priest, and an incensed parent: but I trust I have in some measure been enabled to rely upon him who said to the boisterous waves, Peace, be still.

I am convinced that the doctrine of election is true. The divine sovereignty, as you justly observe, is inscribed

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upon every thing which we behold. And my dear Miss Barnwell has proved to me, that it is far from wearing an unfriendly aspect, even to the unconverted and the chief of sinners. It does, indeed, said she, put an insurmountable obstacle in the way of working for life; but that ought not to be lamented, since it lays the axe at the root of pride. It puts no bar in the way of salvation: *for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*

How forcible are right words. How wise and excellent are the ways of God. How far does our wisdom fall short of those things of the most High, which we esteem unreasonable, weak, or foolish. My friend was a mean, in the hand of God, of making me fall in love with a doctrine which seemed before to wear the most terrific aspect. The truth is this; those parts of divine revelation which appear unfriendly, or even unreasonable, in theory, are salutary in practice.

Notwithstanding the magnitude of my crimes, I hope I have not committed the unpardonable sin. In addition to what you have said concerning that sin, Miss Barnwell ascribes its unpardonableness, not to the insufficiency of the blood of Christ, but to its being a proud or malicious rejection of the way of salvation. The first ray of divine light which shone into my soul, was a conviction that I had trampled under foot the blood of the Son of God; and the moment I saw what I had done, floods of tears accompanied the happy discovery; I fled for refuge to that Being whom I had injured; and my grief was swallowed up by joy.

It remains that I labour continually to make my calling and election sure. If Mrs. Worthington will be so kind as to send me, in her next letter, a description of a true Christian, it will be a valuable addition to the favours conferred on,

Dear Madam,

Your much obliged friend,

MARIA NEVILLE.

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LETTER XXXVIII.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I STILL continue with Miss Neville. We expect a letter from you every post, containing news from our dear Eusebia, and in the meantime console ourselves with the consideration that she is under the protection of an almighty Guardian.

About five o'clock this evening, as we were sitting in the court, Mr. Clifford rode by in his way to his own house. He stopped to tell me that he had received a letter from Ireland from his son, whose return to Poplar Grange he expects every day. We invited him to tea. In the course of the conversation, he told us that the letters he received from him were full of religion, which, cried he, is thrown away upon me. This produced the following conversation.

Mir. Is it because you really think that if you were a believer, you would be unhappy, that you so obstinately resist the evidences of Christianity?

Mr. C. Undoubtedly. Pray what should I gain by its being true?

Mir. Nothing, Sir, if you were to live and die in unbelief. But permit me to assert, that if you were to believe it, you would be a great gainer.

Mr. C. I think you cannot defend your assertion. Suppose I were to believe this moment every thing written by the apostles, I should immediately become a miserable creature.

Mir. I must beg leave to deny this. And I challenge you, Sir, to lay your finger upon any one proposition in the New Testament, and to prove that the belief of it would make you miserable.

Mr. C. It is every where declared that the wicked will be

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damned. I know that I am a wicked man. Can you persuade me that to believe I shall be damned would make me happy?

Mir. If, Sir, you were to believe that the threatenings of the gospel will be executed, what effect would it have upon you?

Mr. C. I say again, it would make me miserable.

Mir. And what do miserable people do?

Mr. C. They try to get rid of their misery. But the Christian religion does not encourage men to try to save themselves. Heaven is not to be purchased by good works.

Mir. It is true. Go then to the Almighty Parent of the universe for mercy. Implore the pardon of your sins for the sake of Jesus Christ, and your suit will not be rejected.

Mr. C. Alas, Miss Barnwell, it is a vain attempt to endeavour to cleanse this Augean stable. Answer this question, Was the reputed son of the carpenter the Creator of the world?

Mir. I believe he was.

Mr. C. Well done, girl, that is honest. I hate those who defend the religion of Jesus by asserting that the deity of the Messiah, and the doctrine of the atonement, are no parts of it. Do you think they believe themselves what they endeavour to impose upon others? Not a tittle, not a tittle of it, I assure you.

Mir. I cannot say that, Sir. They undoubtedly are but partial believers.

Mr. C. I am too honest to become a Christian upon those terms. If Jesus did not assert his divinity, and if his death is not maintained to be an atonement for the sins of his followers, there is no meaning in language. He was condemned and crucified for blasphemy. If his enemies had misunderstood him, would not his disciples have declared after his death that he laid no claim to deity? I require that you show the reasonableness of the divinity of Jesus. How could that Being who fills the universe become a man, and be brought up to a trade?

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Indeed, how can he become the object of sight, who being every where, is necessarily invisible.

Mir. You appear to allow that there is a great Being who created the world?

Mr. C. I cannot doubt it. Wonderful contrivance is displayed in every thing which I behold.

Mir. I am glad you believe the existence of a God.—I further ask, Wherein does man eminently differ from the brute creation?

Mr. C. In his ability to contemplate and admire the works of God, and to reverence their Almighty but invisible Author.

Mir. Is it not probable that a part of the rational creation will be the companions of that God whose works they now contemplate and admire, and whom they now reverence and love?

Mr. C. Companions, my friend? God is every where, and beholds his creatures; but his creatures cannot see him.

Mir. Cannot God visibly manifest himself to them?

Mr. C. Such a manifestation would not display a thousandth part of his perfections.

Mir. I do not ask whether creatures can comprehend their Creator, but whether he can visibly appear to them?

Mr. C. Suppose I grant it.

Mir. If you grant it, you cannot tax with absurdity the appearance of God as a man, a poor man, and a carpenter. The great possessions of the rich, and the martial robes of the warrior, attract the notice of the giddy throng; but every thing is valued by the sovereign of the universe according to its moral excellence.

Mr. C. All the world shall never persuade me that there are three Gods.

Mir. I shall not attempt to do it.

Mr. C. But does not Athanasius in his creed declare that there are three Gods?

Mir. He tells us that the Father is God, that the Son is

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God, and that the holy Spirit is God; yet that there are not three Gods, but one God. This is equal to saying, that the one Jehovah is both the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit. Every Athanasian maintains this; and you, Sir, have acknowledged the possibility of it.

To this Mr. Clifford could only reply by saying that I argued tolerably well, but that I had chosen a very improper subject to work upon. I told him the greater was his misfortune; but that I would pray for him, for which he thanked me.

He has been at the Hall since I left it, and he tells me that my father and mother live very much at variance. They quarrelled before him about what she had lost at play, and about debts that he had paid which were contracted before her marriage.

Miss Neville unites with me in the best wishes for your happiness.

I am, dear Madam,
Your affectionate niece,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XXXIX.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Neville.

DEAR MISS NEVILLE,

I RECEIVED your letter and that of my niece. My delay in writing proceeded from the hope that I should be able to give you the happy intelligence of the arrival of your sister, from whom however I have not at present heard.

I rejoice that the great truths of the gospel are not offensive to you; but it gives me still greater pleasure that you approve and embrace them.

I learn by my niece's letter that you have had Mr.

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Clifford with you. Poor man, he has long been enlisted under the banner of infidelity. We may perceive by the conversation he has had with my niece, how little it is that infidels have to say in defence of their rejection of divine revelation. Those truths which in his view are the most unreasonable and absurd, such as the dreadful threatenings to sinners, and the divinity of our dear Redeemer, she has shown to be as agreeable to right reason as they are to the Scriptures. Infidels talk of the absurdity of God's dwelling with men. Yet much of the heathen mythology is, I am persuaded, nothing but this truth in ruins. God's visiting the patriarchs seems to give but little uneasiness to unbelievers, whether Jews or Gentiles. To what can we attribute this, except that there was not that visible poverty in those appearances of the divine Majesty under the Old Testament which there is under the New.

You desire me to give you a description of a true Christian. It may not be improper previously to observe, that unregenerate persons may possess partially, and for a time, many of the marks of a servant of God. It is not improbable that our heavenly Father, who is wise in counsel, has left instances of those who have been almost Christians, that we may watch over ourselves and each other with a holy jealousy, and never think of laying down our arms, and making peace with our internal enemies, which he has determined that we shall expel under the conduct of the Captain of our salvation.

A Christian is one whose ears God has opened to hearken to his voice; whose understanding he has enlightened by his Spirit to discern the divine glory shining in the character of the despised Jesus of Nazareth; and who is convinced that the righteousness of the Redeemer is the only robe in which he can appear before God. Though a person should hold a number of errors, which to you or me may appear inconsistent with this fundamental truth; yet if this truth be held fast, his spot is but the spot of God's children. The plague of leprosy has affected nothing but the skin; the vitals are not touched: therefore the high

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priest of our profession will pronounce him clean. Wherever this faith is genuine, it will be productive of trust in the Redeemer, and the language of the soul will be like that of Habakkuk, *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* If a Christian be tempted to depart from Christ, he will say with Peter, *Lord, to whom shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life: and I believe and am sure that thou art that Christ, the son of the living God.* And where faith and hope are genuine, they are always accompanied by love to God and to all his commandments. But upon this grace I intend to be more particular; because by works of love to God and our neighbour we glorify our heavenly Father in the sight of the world, and prove that we are neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. If we love God, the grand idol Self is dethroned, and God reigns in our souls Though sinful self-love and its brood of evils are constantly asking for admittance, they are denied it; and if they slip in unawares, they are turned out with detestation.

2. Meditation, prayer, and other religious duties, are not submitted to with reluctance, and merely as smaller evils; for God pours upon his people a spirit of prayer and supplication, and the most exalted happiness of the unconverted sinner will not bear to be compared with that joy and serenity which flow from reconciliation with God. Bibulus is afraid to neglect family prayer. If, therefore, he have spent the whole day in a tavern, he will call his children and servants to prayer at night, because he thinks none but wicked people neglect the worship of God in their families. But, Bibulus, if the love of Christ had any share in your devotion, there would be a greater uniformity in your conduct, and you would spend the day to his glory as well as the night.

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3. If the love of the Supreme Being be our prevailing passion, we have imbibed the meek and humble spirit of his Son, who is the image of the invisible od. We are teachable, and childlike; every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; we do not love grandeur and magnificence, but condescend to men of low estate, and are content in the meanest station. We prefer that which our heavenly Father prefers, and are desirous that he should choose our portion for us. Clitus is zealous in his profession of religion; but wherever he comes, he must have the pre-eminence: he can bear neither superior nor equal. This temper renders his Christianity doubtful; for he who does not possess the spirit of Christ, and who has not learned of him to be meek and lowly, is none of his.

4. Our God being just and holy, if we do not abhor every thing which is unjust, or unholy, we do not love him. How can any one love the divine character who does not endeavour to imitate it? We see an eminent instance of this love of justice and holiness in Joseph. *There is none greater*, said he to his mistress, *in this house than I; neither hath my master kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?* Neither does the Christian censure the conduct of the divine Being, because he has mercy on whom he will have mercy; because he hardened the heart of Pharoah; nor because he chose Jacob in preference to Esau before either of them was born. The whole world could not persuade him that the Judge of all the earth will not do that which is right. He is well assured, that if, to preserve his justice from being violated, he spared not his own Son, he will on no account do any thing contrary to the purity of his nature.

5. The love of God will cause us to love those who bear his image, and in proportion as they appear to us to bear it. These, however they may be despised by the world, we shall esteem the excellent of the earth. And this love, where it is real, will not consist merely in an affection

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which we feel for them, much less in courteous behaviour, or kind speeches; but, as we have opportunity, we shall minister to them of our substance, pray for and instruct them, or show our love to them in the best way we are able. A sinful self-love forms the basis of the character of every unregenerate man; for if he is induced to give all his goods to feed the poor, selfishness is the only motive. But the Christian is animated by nobler principles. His supreme affection is placed upon that great Being, whose holiness and goodness are beyond all comprehension, and infinitely beyond all bounds. It is his habitual delight to be obedient to his commands, and he loves his image wherever he sees it impressed. This love to the servants of God is an essential part of the Christian character, and is that by which the sincerity of our faith will be tried at the grand assize. Christ will then say *I* was an hungered and ye gave *me* meat; not, *My disciples* were an hungered, and ye gave *them* meat.—The divine temper of love also shows itself, in meekly bearing and in mercifully forgiving injuries; for charity, or love, suffereth long for the sake of Christ, and yet is kind. *Father, forgive them*, said our suffering Saviour, *for they know not what they do:* and his martyr Stephen followed his example, crying out in his last moments, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*

6. If we love God, we shall prefer his favour to every thing which the world holds up to our view; yea, to life itself; and sin will consequently be accounted the greatest of evils, because it unavoidably tends to separate us from communion with him. Believers have sometimes been surprised into great sins. While they are in this wilderness, they carry a body of sin and death about with them; and the flesh, with its corrupt affections, lusteth against the spirit, or that new nature or mind which God hath given them. But sin is the object of their detestation; and even those sins which the world entirely overlook will appear exceedingly sinful to them, because they are contrary to him whom their soul loveth. Unrenewed persons may dislike sin on several accounts; as because it hurts their

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honour, or interest, or puts them in fear of condemnation: but they never hate it merely because God hates it, and because it is their meat and drink to do his will.

7. Love to God manifests itself in a childlike disposition. *Because ye are sons*, says Paul, *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* Adam, when he lost the divine image, lost the temper of a child, and fled from God as a slave flees from his master. When we are adopted into God's family, then that childlike disposition returns, which is productive of the best consequence, no obedience being acceptable to him where it is wanting. Whoever therefore entertains a strong suspicion that he is not interested in the divine favour may assure himself that his love to God is weak and languishing, if indeed it have any existence.

8. The knowledge of the true God always precedes the love of him. To love an unknown God is to love an idol of our own imagination. The true God has no bodily parts, but is the one pure eternal Mind, and can only be seen by us in his works. The works of creation are grand and magnificent, and would fill with amazement every rational being, were it not for that sottish stupidity which forms a part of original corruption; and they as well as the works of providence, display the divine goodness, wisdom, and power. But the works of redemption by the Son, and of sanctification by the Spirit, so far surpass them, that the sun itself is eclipsed by their more refulgent splendour. To be warmed and enlightened, to be fed and clothed, are great blessings, and call for gratitude to our Benefactor: but to be delivered from the wrath to come, and to be made partakers of eternal blessedness in the presence of God, are favours of such a nature, that no language can describe their worth. The heathen world, before the coming of Christ, are represented as lying in wickedness. Although they professed to know God, yet they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; that is, they did not love him. And the Jews who rejected the Messiah were truly told by him, that the love of God was not in them.

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Believers who lived under the Old Testament dispensation possessed this divine knowledge. They looked forwards to the Messiah who was to come. Abraham *rejoiced to see his day; and he saw it, and was glad.* David *in spirit called him Lord.* Isaiah *saw his glory, and spake of him.* Indeed all the prophets wrote concerning him: for it is said, that *beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* But we live under a dispensation of superior light. To us the son of righteousness has arisen. He has assumed our nature; God has dwelt with man upon the earth; *that eternal life which was with the Father has been manifested unto us;* he has been *preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.* We therefore certainly cannot expect eternal life, unless we know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

I have written a long letter, notwithstanding I am far from having finished what I intended to say. I must defer what remains till I write again, which I hope the arrival of your sister from France will soon give me the pleasure of doing.

I continually pray for your whole family, and am, with sincere affection to yourself and to my niece,

My dear Miss Neville,

Your friend and obedient servant,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XL.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Neville.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

YOUR sister is not arrived, nor have I yet received a letter from her. I anxiously expect either one or the

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other every day. I shall endeavour to beguile the tedious moments by resuming the subject of my last letter.

9. As soon as the love of God is kindled in his breast, the sinner views temporal objects with new eyes. He better understands the value of riches, honour, and every other transitory good, and esteems the divine favour the one thing needful. All unregenerate men have this in common; they place their chief happiness, in some way or other, in that which is not God. In a word, those who do not love the divine Being, and who do not prefer his favour to every other object, will be found at last never to have loved him at all.

10. In examining whether we truly love God, there are few better rules than, when we are reading the writings of the apostles and prophets, to consider whether our minds are in unison with them. The cxixth psalm shows this to have been eminently the case of the sweet singer of Israel. We cannot love God in any greater degree, than we think in conformity with those living oracles. Every error has a tendency to weaken our love to God, because in some way or other it gives us erroneous conceptions of him. Or if our love should not be thereby weakened, it will be, in that respect, not love to God, but to an idol of our imagination. Whether this idol be numerically one, or three, or a thousand, the difference is of small account. He therefore who thinks as the apostles and prophets thought, and who loves the truth which they delivered, loves that God whose truth it is.

A counterfeit love of God is not uncommon. Catholics hug and kiss a crucifix, and bedew it with tears. They are likewise greatly moved by the representation of the sufferings of Christ in pictures. But the affections may be mechanically excited, where there is no knowledge of the divine character, nor the least love to it.

Protestants may work themselves up into raptures by an ideal view of Christ upon the cross, or in the garden of Gethsemane. This of itself is nothing but the effect of imagination. It is a malady which frequently attends per-

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sons who are truly religious, but it is no part of religion. It may be, and frequently has been, where there is no knowledge of God, or love to him as he is exhibited in his works and in his word. In this last case such persons are often flamingly zealous, and consider themselves as Christians of the first magnitude; but they presently fall away, and bring an odium on that religion to which they were utter strangers.

The Pharisee in the parable thanked God for favours he had never received, and imagined the divine Being had as high an opinion of him as he had of himself. As his excellence was an imaginary excellence, so the object of his love and thankfulness was an imaginary god. The Pharisees thought highly of themselves on account of their obedience to the letter of the law, and to the numerous additions made to it by their elders; and had a proud confidence that they were thought highly of by God. These men are dead; but men of the same character are still to be found. Provided a person have no knowledge of the divine Being, nor love to him, yet if he can persuade himself, or be persuaded by others, upon unsubstantial grounds, that he is an object of the divine favour, his affections may be greatly moved, and he may think that he loves God. And so indeed he does: but it is not the true God; it is a god who he thinks makes great account of him. Men of this description are under the influence of worldly motives, and seldom associate with the people of God any longer than their pride, or covetousness, or some sensual passion is gratified. In a word, the mere pretenders to Christianity are either ignorant of the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, or, so far as they understand it, are enemies to it. They are frequently either zealous for the gospel in opposition to the law, or for the law in opposition to the gospel. Not so the man whom God has begotten by his word of truth; he loves the whole mind of God revealed in his word; yea, he meekly submits to that part of divine revelation which seems to be entirely against him. Thus David humbled himself before God when Nathan brought the cutting mes-

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sage. When the Lord slew the sons of Aaron, and he was commanded not to mourn for them, he submitted; and Eli did the same when Samuel told him what God had denounced against his house.

I constantly pray, Miss Neville, that you may be preserved in the hour of temptation which seems to be coming upon you. Remember that they only who endure to the end will be saved. Lot's wife looked back upon Sodom, and perished. We must be willing to give up our lives, rather than offend him who is able to cast both body and soul into hell. His favour is so excellent, and his displeasure so dreadful, that every thing besides is comparatively little and unimportant.

I have now remaining what the world would call a very small pittance. But, with frugality, it is sufficient to place you and your brother and sister, as well as my niece and me, above want, till God provide better for you. And it has this to recommend it; you will receive it with a hearty welcome. If you should be removed to a place where I shall have no opportunity of writing to you, remember these necessary things; that there is no salvation but by Jesus Christ; that his obedience to the law of God is our only justifying righteousness; that it is the duty of every sinner to come to God through him for pardon; that that faith, with which eternal life is connected, is a belief, mixed with approbation, of the testimony of God concerning his Son; that effectual calling is the sovereign act of God; and that the whole plan of salvation hides pride from the Christian, and inculcates love to that great Being, from whom all our blessings flow.

I am, my dear Miss Neville,

Yours very affectionately,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

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LETTER XLI.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR NIECE,

MY anxiety about our dear Eusebia increases, as I doubt not does yours, and that of Miss Neville.

My design in writing this letter is to divert my attention for a while to another subject, as well as to produce the same effect, my dear friends, upon you.

For every thought, and word, and action, we shall give an account at the day of judgment. We shall be tried by the statute-book of heaven. The word of God is that book. It is a matter of the greatest importance then that we understand it, and that it be the rule of our faith, and the directory of our practice. The truths which it contains are too solemn to exercise the talents of the speculative disputant: they ought rather to excite the fears of the unbeliever, and to cherish the hopes of the Christian. But still we ought to study them with attention; to inquire what is their precise meaning; and to pray that we may be guided in our researches by the Spirit of God.

To these observations I have been led by a conversation which I had this afternoon with my grocer, Mr. Rose, who, I have not the least doubt is a sincere Christian. It is very possible for Christians to misunderstand the laws of Christ, especially if they do not keep clear of party prejudice. Were I to find any fault with Mr. Rose, it would be for being too positive, and rather too much prejudiced in favour of his own judgment. A claim to infallibility, or any very near approaches to it, come with a bad grace from Protestants, none of whom has a right to call himself the true interpreter of the laws of Christ, imperfection being written upon every person and every thing here below.

In the course of the conversation, I happened to mention Mr. *****, the Baptist minister. Mr. Rose immedi-

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ately interrupted me by observing, that the rejection of infant-baptism proceeded from a disbelief of that perfect atonement, which saves us in the same manner as it saves our infants. These people, continued he, suppose that salvation is owing to something beside the thing signified in baptism, and that some condition is to be performed by us, which infants are unable to perform, notwithstanding our Lord has expressly declared, that we must enter his kingdom just as infants enter it.

Ought we not rather, Sir, replied I, to take it for granted, if we will not give ourselves the trouble to inquire into their opinion on that subject, that our brethren the Baptists are inconsistent with themselves? It would be kinder to do so, than to charge them with denying the atonement of Christ, merely because they do not baptize their infants. Perhaps, Mr. Rose, if a Baptist were here, he would retort the charge, and tell you that the baptizing of infants was virtually denying the doctrine of the atonement, since it might be inferred, that you esteemed something else to be necessary to their salvation; and something, too, for which you had neither precept nor example in the word of God. Thus might you reproach and accuse each other, without charity, without truth, without edification, and without end.

Charity, Madam? said he; I confess I am no great admirer of that Antinomian charity, which takes it for granted that all are Christians who can talk about illuminations, imputed righteousness, and the other great truths of the gospel, at the same time that they manifest their disbelief of them, by paying no regard to many of the injunctions of our Lord and his apostles. Every society united by this false charity, is a branch of that grand antichristian apostasy, or opposition to Christ in the name of Christ, which was to take place in the world. Those who are truly of God hear God's word.

But you do not esteem, Sir, replied I, the little society to which you belong, to be the only church of Christ, considering all others as antichristian?

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Indeed, Madam, I do, answered he. No society upon earth will bear to be measured by the word of God, except the church of which I am a member, and the churches in connexion with us. Yet I have no doubt that there are many Christians beside those in fellowship with us; but the voice of God to them is, Come out from among them, and be ye separate.

You suppose then, said I, that all the members of your society are real Christians?

No, Madam, replied he, I do not.

Then I find, Sir, that in your church, as well as in others, there are both good and bad.

Be it so, Madam, answered he: but then we profess an entire subjection to Christ; and whenever it appears that any one does not yield an unreserved submission to all his precepts, we put away the unclean from among us. Like the church of Ephesus, we cannot bear those who are evil; who say that they are Jews, and are not; but who manifest by their works that they are of the synagogue of Satan.

I commend every society of Christians, said I, for carefully watching over the conduct of its members. I am also ready to acknowledge, that protestant dissenters, in general, have been remiss in this particular duty. They have too much endeavoured to acquire large, and, as they are falsely called, flourishing congregations; and have too often neglected to purge out the old leaven, except for notorious evils. But is it not possible to run into the contrary extreme, and to pluck up the wheat together with the tares? Your society, Sir, will not be able, any more than others, to shut out those from its communion, who have the address to imitate both the faith and practice of Christians, as long as that imitation is attended with honour and interest. Many followed the Redeemer when he was here upon earth, not because they saw his miracles, but because they had eaten of the loaves; and he has had such followers in all ages.

True, Madam, replied he; but protestant dissenters, in general, do not so much as profess to be obedient to all

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the laws of Christ: it is no wonder, therefore, if their obedience be very deficient. No sin ought to be esteemed little, nor any of the commands of Christ of small importance. When do your ministers press upon their hearers abstinence from blood? When do they enforce the kiss of charity? or when do they exhort the friends of Jesus to follow his example, by washing each other's feet? Do they ever so much as mention it to be the duty of Christians to lay up treasure in heaven, in opposition to laying it up on earth, which our Lord has called by the name of covetousness? If a minister of the gospel were to tell a company of modern professors, that it is covetousness to lay up treasure on earth, and that the covetous are among those who will be excluded from the kingdom of heaven, they would deride him, as the Pharisees, who were covetous, derided Christ.

I perceive, Sir, said I, that you insist upon our receiving the commands of Christ in their most literal sense; and if that be the sense in which they were intended to be understood, you are certainly right; but that remains to be proved. From blood I myself abstain, as do many with whom I am acquainted: it was always esteemed a sacred thing, as well before the institution of the law of Moses as since its abolition.—The kiss of charity I consider as a mode of salutation common to the time and place in which it was enjoined. Laying hold of each other's hand is the manner of salutation in this country, and as much love may be expressed in that mode as any other; not that I am disposed to find fault with those who are otherwise minded. I am likewise a stranger to the precise manner in which the first Christians saluted each other, as I believe, Sir, you are too. I confess I have never washed any one's feet; but I have been ready to do the servants of Christ the meanest offices; and I assure Mr. Rose, that whenever washing his feet will be of any benefit to him, or whenever it shall be in my power to render him any other service, I will cheerfully do it. When sandals were worn, to assist any one in washing his feet was a friendly office.

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In every country, it is requisite that Christians should be humble, and that they should condescend to alleviate the distresses of their brethren as much as they can. They who act otherwise, manifest themselves to be strangers to the spirit and temper of Christ, who, in condescending to wash the feet of his disciples, did not enjoin the observation of a ceremony, but taught them by his example to do the meanest offices for each other.

It does not become Christians, Madam, replied he, to explain away the precepts of Christ. The apostasy of our first parents was owing to such a mode of reasoning.

I acknowledge, Sir, said I, that to adhere to the letter of scripture is a good general rule; but it is not without many exceptions. Transubstantiation is founded on scripture literaly understood, as well as several other errors of the Romish church. We ought to take care, that in avoiding one error we do not run into the contrary extreme.

And pray, Madam, cried he, how do you understand the command of Christ not to lay up treasure on earth? I doubt not but you can explain it in such a manner as to make it mean the very reverse.

The servants of Jesus, replied I, are taught, that he who clotheth the grass of the field, and feedeth the fowls of the air, will also provide for them. It is their duty therefore to be diligent in business, without being anxiously concerned about making provision, either for a long time to come, or even for the morrow; since an eager solicitude of that kind can be of no advantage, but must rather add a weight to the present evils, which our Lord observes are sufficiently heavy.—To attend more immediately to your question, let me appeal to yourself. Are we not as expressly commanded to take no thought for the morrow, and to sell that which we have and give alms, as we are not to lay up treasure on earth? Wherefore then do you pay such great regard to the literal sense of this last text of scripture, when you pay so little to that of the two former? In my opinion, it is much more the duty of the opulent to lessen their fortunes in order to alleviate the necessities

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of the indigent, than it is of a poor man to give away every thing which remains to him out of his daily labour, without making provision for a time of sickness or for old age. Would it not be presumptuous in him to trust to an interposition of Providence in his behalf, while he neglected that duty which he owes to himself? It is as much the duty of one who is rich to be mortified to the world, as it is of one who is poor; and there is as much danger of covetousness and sensuality in the possession of riches, as in the increasing of them.

When the Church is in great distress, said he, it certainly becomes us, not only to give away the surplus of our income, but even to sell our possessions, as the first churches did, and to distribute as every one has need.

I agree with you, Sir, replied I: but if the church is not in that distress, it appears to me to be more lawful to increase our substance, after having dedicated a part of our profits to charitable uses, than it is to spend our whole income upon ourselves, without regarding the necessities of others.—If, Sir, I do not mistake, you have ten children. Several of them you have put apprentices to such businesses as will require a considerable sum to set up in: and Thomas and William will be but poor grocers if they have empty shops. Your daughters too have received a genteel education, which will be a real injury to them if you do not give them fortunes. But I believe, Sir, they have little to fear. That diligence which my friend manifests in his business, not to say that eagerness with which he pursues the world, is a proof to me that he is but an indifferent convert to his own doctrine. His conduct in this respect is I think a little censurable. Is it right, my dear Sir, to lay a trap for tender consciences, and to neglect that which we enjoin upon others? I should like very much to know whether my friend is worth no more now than he was five years ago.

Why, Madam, said he, as my family have increased, I have been obliged to increase my business, and have therefore required a greater capital. But I do not call this lay-

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ing up treasure on earth;—I can no more carry on my trade without money, than a husbandman can sow his land without seed.

Very true, Sir, replied I; but still you have increased your possessions, which I look upon as an evil, only because my friend allows that in himself which he condemns in others. What is the difference between your extending your trade as your wealth increases, and another person's putting his money out at interest, or placing it in the funds, because he has no opportunity to enlarge his trade? We ought not to keep a bag of deceitful weights, and to use one weight for ourselves and another for our neighbours. You are not the first, Sir, that I have seen, who has denied the lawfulness of laying up treasure on earth, at the same time that he has been unremittingly pursuing the world.—I will readily acknowledge that the love of money is the root of all evil. A covetous Christian sounds no better in my ear than a cheating, lewd, or drunken Christian. The word of God contains many exhortations to be rich in good works, and willing to communicate of our substance to all who are in distress, but especially to our own household, and to those who are of the household of faith. It also contains rules, whereby we may proportion our liberality in common cases, as well as precedents which it may be proper for us to follow. Zaccheus proposed giving the half of his goods, or perhaps of his income to the poor, and also making a fourfold restitution to those whom he had injured; Jacob dedicated a tenth of his substance to God; and I doubt not but their examples have been imitated by many of the servants of God.

One of the rules which the holy Spirit has prescribed is, that every one should give cheerfully what he has purposed in his own heart. There are times and seasons when Christians enjoy much of the divine presence, and when they are better disposed than at other times. In those tender and endearing moments, it is natural for them to inquire what they shall render unto the Lord for all his benefits: and what they then resolve to do for Christ in

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his members, ought from that moment to be sacred, and to be faithfully applied to the intended use.

Another rule is, to lay by in store upon the first day of the week as God has prospered us: the proportion is left, like the free-will offering under the law, to the discretion of the giver, because no particular direction would apply to every case.

I do not think, Sir, continued I, that it is a wise method of enforcing that obedience which every Christian owes to the laws of Christ, to stretch them beyond their true meaning; since they who attempt to prove too much, frequently prove nothing at all. If the church were in great distress, I acknowledge it would be criminal in us to increase our substance; but it would be equally criminal not to sell our possessions for the support of our fellow Christians.

Pleading the cause of covetousness, Madam, replied he, is pleading the cause of idolatry; for he who could not err has told us, that where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. There is a wide difference betwixt retaining what we possess and laying up more. He who desires to be rich is an idolater, because he trusts in Mammon, and is afraid to rely upon God, as appears by his not being contented in his present condition. They who possessed houses or lands, might lawfully forbear to sell them, even when all things were common. *Whilst it remained*, said Peter to Anapias, *was it not thine own? And after it was sold was it not in thy own power?* You perceive, Madam, there is a great difference between retaining our possessions and increasing them.

Indeed, Sir, answered I, they appear to me to be equally lawful, or equally culpable; since we are as much commanded to sell what we have and give alms, as we are not to lay up treasure on earth. An anxious importunity, either to keep our possessions or to increase them, is covetousness: it manifests that our minds are more disposed to trust in uncertain riches, than in the living God. Moreover, it ought to be remarked, that the young man in

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the gospel was reproved, not for desiring to augment his possessions, but for being unwilling to part with them; on which occasion our Lord observed, that it was *trusting* in riches which made it so difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. If the *possession* of riches unavoidably draw the heart from God, what do you think, Sir, of many of the Old Testament saints, who had great possessions, which they acquired not merely by the divine permission, but through the divine favour? Would the most High have given them such abundance, if the gift had been incompatible with retaining the possession of their hearts? I am however ready to acknowledge, that a state of affluence is attended with many temptations; and that where God bestows riches upon his children, their gratitude ought to be mixed with fear and trembling, since the difficulties to which they are exposed may be compared to a camel's going through the eye of a needle.

We had more conversation on this subject; but it ended as disputes generally do, without change of sentiment on either side. When we have once adopted this or that opinion, we are apt to look upon it with a parental fondness; and our certainty of its truth increases, not as the evidence increases, but in proportion to the warmth with which we have defended it.

Mr. Rose is, upon the whole, a very excellent man. If such persons misapprehend the divine oracles, how does it become us to implore the divine assistance, and to beseech our heavenly Father to give us large portions of his Spirit, that we may be led into all truth, and cheerfully submit to his guidance in whatever we perceive to be his will!

It would have savoured of ostentation, or I might have told this gentleman, that I have long practised myself what he insists upon to be the duty of all. When we had children, my dear husband, who did every thing by rule, appropriated a tenth part of what he gained by trade to charitable uses; and after their death he did the same by the whole. His fortune was considerably impaired before he died by many losses; yet he continued to give away the surplus of

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our income. But he often observed to me, that though he believed this to be his duty in his present circumstances, yet this rule would no more suit every person, than the same coat would fit men of different statures, or one medicine cure every disease.

I know a very worthy man who is a draper. When he married, and began business, his wife and he were worth about three hundred pounds. He entered upon a shop belonging to a person who had failed, and took the stock. In order to do this, he borrowed eight hundred pounds, which, with the divine blessing on his industry, he has repaid, notwithstanding he has had an increasing family. But would it have been agreeable to the spirit of the New Testament, to tell this young couple, upon their beginning the world, that the laws of Christ's kingdom did not permit them to be worth a shilling more than the three hundred pounds which they set up with? that to attempt it would be idolatry? and that whatever they might imagine themselves to feel of the divine presence, yet, if they should increase their possessions, they would manifest that they were unbelievers, and that all their religion, and joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, were mere self-deception, and nothing more than a religious path to hell? I think that such an intemperate and ignorant zeal would have gone as far beyond the truth, as it is to be feared, many professors of the present day fall short of it. Undoubtedly covetousness, or an inordinate desire of the things of time and sense, be they what they may, is an evil as dreadful as it is common. It becomes every servant of Jesus to watch and pray against it; for as, when the eye is evil or disordered, the whole body is full of darkness, so if a Christian, or one who calls himself a Christian, be covetous, we may depend upon it that he is a fruitless branch in every respect, and nigh unto cursing. Many, it is to be feared, deceive themselves, by thinking what they would do for the poor servants of Jesus, if they were in such or such circumstances; not considering, that God requires us to do our duty in the station wherein he has placed us,

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and to be liberal according to what we have, and not according to what we have not.

I have this moment received a letter from our dear Eusebia, which I shall enclose. I hope she herself will soon arrive.

Please to present my respects to Miss Neville, and to my good friends Thomas and Mary Livingstone.

My dear Miranda, I ever remain,
Your affectionate aunt,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XLII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE it once more in my power to write to my friends, but know not whether that will ever be the case again.

It is past ten at night. I have just left my father, who has been assuring me that another day shall not pass before I either renounce my heresy, or enter upon my noviciate. Having tried every lenient method in vain, he is determined, he says, to enforce that authority with which God and nature have intrusted him. Father Albino desired me to consider that heresy is a species of insanity, and that heretics ought to be under the guidance of the sober-minded. I replied that the apostle Paul had been charged with madness, as well as his divine master; and that I was not ashamed to bear the reproach of Christ. I begged my father to consider that I was no more able to change my religion than he was to change his. I further told him that I could not consent to go into a nunnery; and I implored upon my knees, that, as he himself hoped for mercy, he would show mercy to a poor orphan. He wept, and lifting me up embraced me, mingling his tears with mine. My dear Eusebia, cried he, I do violence to

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my nature; but I cannot bear to see you out of the pale of the church: therefore do not reply, for I will be obeyed. My dear brother entreated my father to give me more time to consider of it. He replied, that his determination was the result of much consideration, of the best advice, and of many prayers; that he had bound himself to the performance of it by a solemn vow; and that therefore all entreaties would be vain.

I left the room in great distress, and my brother followed me; but I embraced him, and entreated him to return to my father. I may perhaps escape. I am not without hopes of it; and in that case I earnestly pray that no part of the blame may be laid upon him.

My brother has given me an account of the method which God took to make him behold the true light in this land of darkness. A great company will be gathered out of every nation; and many who now appear to be first in privileges, and perhaps in visible attainments, will be last, while the last will be first.

How does it become us, with the great apostle of the Gentiles, to keep the prize in view. Eternal things demand all our attention. Eternity is a vast ocean without a shore. I long to bid farewell to sun, moon, and stars, and to be an inhabitant of that city where such auxiliaries will be for ever useless.

My kind love to all my dear friends is all at present, and perhaps for ever, from, Dear Madam,

Your affectionate friend,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XLIII.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

MY DEAR AUNT,

WE received your letter, enclosing a letter from my much injured friend; and as I was yesterday in Miss Ne-

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ville's closet I heard a carriage drive into the court-yard. I looked through the window, and saw Mr. William Neville on horseback, and his father and the priest getting out of a postchaise. Not seeing my dear Eusebia, I concluded that she was imprisoned in a nunnery. But Miss Neville soon came up and informed me that her sister made her escape from St. Omer's the morning after the date of her letter. Immediately upon her being missed, which was not till her brother went to call her to breakfast, several persons were sent different ways in quest of her. But the whole day being spent without gaining any intelligence, Mr. Neville was filled with the deepest distress, and he determined to return home the next morning by the way of Dunkirk. He desired father Albino and his son to go by Calais, thinking that it would be impossible for Eusebia to elude their pursuit. They all met in London three days after, without having accomplished their purpose.

Miss Neville is full of grief for the loss of her sister; and her father, she says, is inconsolable. I am very thankful that she is escaped. I trust the same kind Providence will watch over her, which has preserved the servants of God in every age and nation.

I continued in the closet the remainder of the day, and at night removed to Thomas Livingstone's. I told Miss Neville I was determined not to be seen by her father, since it would exasperate him without answering any valuable end. She agreed with me that it becomes Christians not to invite calamity. But, said she, you may be here without my father's knowledge, if you can confine yourself to your room while he and father Albino are at home. I told her that I had determined to go to the house of our friend Thomas Livingstone when her father should arrive, and that I saw no reason to change my purpose, since I had no doubt of being as happy under his humble roof as if I resided in a palace.

I can undoubtedly perceive a difference between the little cottage in which I now reside, and that building in

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which I was brought up: but the difference, if we consider every thing, is in favour of this humble tenement. The proprietor of the universe, when he stooped to visit his vassals, did not take up his residence in a stately mansion, or a princely palace. He showed no desire to make his entrance in any place better than an inn; and when there was no room for him there, he took up his residence in a stable.

Miss Neville visited me this morning very early. I was not up when she entered my room. She tells me that father Albino said last night at supper, that what Mr. Neville bewailed as an unfortunate event might be a kind providence; for it was possible that Eusebia, when she came to be in want, might remember her father's house, where there was bread enough and to spare, and return, like the repenting prodigal; and that, unless that were the case, he should never wish to see her again within those walls, her breath being pestilential, and every word she spoke as infectious as the plague.

Yes, father, answered Mr. Neville, but I cannot forget that she is my child. Oh what a child! I have sometimes thought, and I believe truly, that for gracefulness of person, modest and affable behaviour, and dutiful affection, the world had not her superior.

All this is true, replied the father; but remember that when the beloved sons of Aaron offered strange fire before the Lord, and were slain for the offence, their father was not suffered even to mourn for them. I myself had almost a parental affection for that young lady; yet I could gladly see her, and all the enemies of the holy Roman catholic apostolic church, consumed in one fire, if it were possible to make one large enough to hold them.

My father, said Miss Neville, wept; and the colour came into my brother's face, who looked at the priest, and said, How much soever my dear sister may have erred, I doubt not but she has poured out many supplications to the Father of mercies for your happiness, and for the happiness of each of us.

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I was so much shocked, continued Miss Neville, at the language of the priest, that I burst into tears. My father told him very angrily, that he abhorred such fiery zeal. My children, said he, I am pleased that you remember my poor child is your sister, notwithstanding she is turned aside from the path of duty.

I told Miss Neville that father Albino always appeared so kind and affable, that I could scarcely have believed him to be of such a sanguinary disposition.

I confess, replied she, that his temper is the most benevolent and humane. But when those of the best disposition imagine they are doing God service by their furious zeal, their natural tempers entirely disappear, and atheists and libertines, compared with them, are valuable members of society.

I inquired whether her brother knew she was a protestant.

She replied, that she had some thoughts yesterday in the afternoon of keeping it a secret, at least for a few days; but that last night after supper she opened her whole soul to him when they were by themselves, and that he received the glad tidings with equal joy and astonishment.

Our dear Eusebia did not disclose to her brother her intention of escaping, though he was with her late on the night before she went away. Poor dear girl; she knew he would be strictly examined by her father, and she was unwilling to bring him into any trouble

I told Miss Neville that things looked very dark respecting her and her brother.

True, my dear friend, replied she; but I thank God I am not now to count the cost. I desire to yield my dear Redeemer all my affection, and to depend upon him alone for support.

I told her I should write to you. She desires her love, and thanks you, as I also do, for your description of a Christian.

You will please to direct your next letter to Thomas Livingstone. I hope it will contain an account of our dear

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friend, who I have no doubt will write to you if she be alive. I sometimes please myself with hoping that she may soon be under your friendly roof.

I am, my dear aunt,
Your affectionate niece,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XLIV.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR NIECE,

I RECEIVED your letter, but have had no letter from, nor have heard any thing of our dear Eusebia. I am afraid some evil has befallen her, or what is so called by us mortals, who sometimes forget that the most afflictive providences are blessings in disguise. I am glad, on their father's account, that Miss Neville and her brother have not declared themselves protestants; for he is sufficiently afflicted already. I do not wonder that father Albino should thirst for the blood of the servants of Jesus. The anti-christian church in the Revelation is represented as riding upon a scarlet-coloured beast, and as being drunken with the blood of the saints. I do not suppose that we are to understand by her the church of Rome only; for though *she* is undoubtedly the mother of harlots, yet this mother has many daughters. No church which is not dependent entirely upon the Redeemer, has any authority to call itself the bride, the Lamb's wife. This appellation does not belong to the worshippers of Mammon: it belongs only to those who submit implicitly to the authority of Christ. If we look around us, how few shall we find who have a single eye to the divine glory! and yet no others have a right to the name of Christians.

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Christianity had not been long in the world before its professors began to seek their own things, and to have men's persons in admiration because of advantage. *Ye adulterers and adulteresses*, says the apostle James, *know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?*

A Christian resembling a light set on a hill is a rare thing in this day. Too many professors of religion follow the men of the world so closely, that they even tread upon their heels. In their houses, their furniture, their tables, and their equipages, there is little or no difference. It is almost as common for them to waste their fortunes by riotous, or, as they would term it, by genteel living, as it is for others. Such persons seem not to know that Christianity requires a life of continual self-denial. The Redeemer commands us to take up our cross daily, that is, to sail contrary to the stream of this world. The apostle Paul kept his body in subjection, ran the heavenly race, and fought the good fight of faith. And if we, my dear niece, are not in earnest, and if we do not daily endeavour to advance in the divine life, we have no reason to believe that God has written his law in our hearts. It is not a bad method, when we are doubtful concerning the propriety of any of our actions, to ask ourselves whether it be probable that the Redeemer, if he were here below, would act in this or that manner; for it is our duty to be conformed to him, and to walk as he walked. To love God is to love his character as it is manifested in his beloved Son. But it is a vain thing to imagine that we love the character of the Son of God, if we habitually and allowedly practise such things as we have no reason to believe he would practise if he were on earth. Persecuting Christians would do well to try themselves by this rule, and to see how far their conduct corresponds with that of the Son of God, who did good unto all, and evil to none; who reproved his disciples when they showed a desire that the Samaritans might be consumed by fire from heaven; who did not however endeavour by flattery to gain applause but told the most harsh and disagreeable truths to those persons at

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whose houses he was entertained; and who did not injure either the bodies or the souls of the children of men. The severity used under the Mosaic law is not to be imitated by the followers of Jesus; nor do the judgments which were inflicted on Elymas the sorcerer, and upon Ananias and Sapphira, justify fallible mortals in persecuting each other. God has sometimes, even in later ages, vindicated his cause by bringing remarkable and terrible judgments upon his enemies; but he will not suffer his servants to avenge themselves, or to support his cause by methods that he has forbidden. It is the duty of a Christian to pray for his enemies, and to render good for evil, and blessing for cursing. The wicked shall not escape unpunished; but vengeance is the divine prerogative, and the exercise of it is not delegated to us. God himself will pour tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil I should have said nothing on this subject, had it not been for the unchristian wish of father Albino. I sincerely pity him, and pray that he may be led to see the criminality of his conduct.

I feel for Mr. William Neville and his sister. I am persuaded they are more concerned at the addition which will probably be made to their father's unhappiness when he knows they are protestants, than at the sufferings which they are likely to endure in consequence of his displeasure. It becomes them, like king Hezekiah, to lay their cause before the Lord, and then they may expect a favourable issue.

The case of my dear niece I should consider as very deplorable, did I not know that there is a consolation in suffering for Christ with which the world is unacquainted. Let me repeat it, you are ever welcome to an asylum in my house; and tell Mr. William and Miss Neville, that, if God shall deprive them of a father, they will find a mother in me. I shall rejoice to render them every service in my power. My house will be sufficient to accommodate us all, and my dear Eusebia too, if God shall restore her to us again; and my income will afford us a frugal main-

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tenance. Pray give my love to your kind host and hostess, and to the friends of Jesus Christ at Thornton Abbey.

I am, my dear niece,
Your affectionate aunt,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

P. S. I have such news to tell you, that my trembling hand will scarcely perform the task. Our dear friend is no more! I have done nothing but weep since I heard of it. I dread to think how her poor father will bear the stroke.

I was about to fold up my letter, when my friend captain Smith entered the room, accompanied by another person. Madam, said he, I fear I have bad news to tell you. I made all the inquiry I could concerning the young lady whom you told me you expected from France. Perhaps you will gain some information from this bundle. I examined it, and found his suspicion to be too well founded. Among other things there was our correspondence in her own hand writing.

The captain told me that the young man who accompanied him, and his captain, were all who were saved out of eight persons, among whom was one young lady. They sailed from Dunkirk in the afternoon; and, it being blowing weather in the night, at three o'clock in the morning the vessel struck on the South Sand head of the Goodwin. They expected her every moment to go to pieces, and therefore hauled out the boat, in which two sailors, the cabin-boy, and three passengers, with great difficulty embarked: but the captain and this sailor preferred staying upon the wreck. He says they could discern the boat founder at about two hundred yards distance. He and the captain, after remaining about an hour upon the wreck, were providentially taken up by a smuggling vessel.

I paid the young man the full value of the bundle which he had saved, and also rewarded him for his intelligence. The bundle I shall send down by the waggon, directed for our friend Thomas Livingstone; and I must leave it to

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the direction of my friends to make Mr. Neville acquainted with the sad event.

How happy it is to be habitually prepared for death! This was eminently the case of our dear Eusebia, and she is now landed in a fair haven, where storms and tempests will be no more; where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

My dear friends, adieu.

LETTER XLV.

From Mr. William Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR kindness to my dear sister, deceased, to myself, and to my family in general, demands my most grateful thanks. I esteem it no common mercy that I am one of those whom you are pleased to honour with a share in your friendship. I assure you, that my sister and I feel such an affection for Mrs. Worthington as may be much easier conceived than expressed.

We are full of grief on account of the loss of the kindest and most tender sister. Oh, what a sister have we lost! No, she is not lost: she is only gone before, to take possession of the mansion which her Lord and head ascended into heaven to prepare for her. Happy, thrice happy they, who have thus passed the swellings of Jordan, and are landed in that Canaan where there are no sons of Anak; who are inhabitants of that city into which no unclean person shall enter; and who are arrived in that paradise where there shall be no more curse!

My dear friend (for so, Madam, must I call you) I am very much afflicted, and at the same time very joyful. If I have buried one sister in the devouring ocean, I have unexpectedly received another from the dead. When I found that my sister had changed the language of Ashdod for that of Canaan, I was like them that dream, and

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could scarcely believe for joy and wonder. All our mercies flow from that God who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. To him I desire to give the praise.

Your amiable niece is well, and at our house, and I believe is not less afflicted than my sister and myself at losing her dear Eusebia. We mourn on account of our own loss; for we have no doubt but her beloved Saviour has conducted her to the promised rest.

I have not mentioned my dear parent: his affliction is great indeed. He considers himself as the murderer of a most beloved child.

When the post-man came yesterday with a letter to father Albino, the old gentleman observed one with a large black seal directed for Thomas Livingstone. He called my father, and told him that that letter probably contained some account of his daughter. The letter-carrier was desired to stop while the footman went for Thomas. When he was come, my father begged him to read it there, and to let him know if there was any thing in it concerning his daughter. Thomas replied that the letter did not belong to him, but to a certain person at his house. My father immediately suspected that my sister was there, and told the good man that he would go with him, as he did not doubt but the person would inform him if there was any thing in the letter concerning his daughter. He was surprised when he saw Miss Barnwell, who, as soon as she saw him, turned pale, and trembled from head to foot. Ah, Miss Barnwell, cried he, how dreadful a thing is guilt! She soon recovered herself sufficiently to tell him, that it was not guilt, but surprise at seeing him there, which affected her. Well, well, replied my father, we will wave this. Thomas has a letter for you; and all I desire to know is, whether it contains any thing concerning my daughter. Miss Barnwell, taking the letter, hastily opened it, and read it to herself, till she came to the post-script, when she fainted away, and dropped it out of her hand.

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If, Madam, you had been there, as I was, you would have seen a melancholy sight indeed. While Thomas and his wife were taking care of Miss Barnwell, I took up the letter, and cast my eye on the postscript. O my dear father, said I, the contents are too bad for you to know. My parent burst into tears, and cried out, My child is dead! Oh she is dead, she is dead! I shall never see her any more! I have murdered my child! No words can describe the grief of my father, and indeed of us all except father Albino, who said the ensuing evening that he had expected no less: that her death was manifestly a divine judgment; and that if he was her father, he should no more grieve for her than for a dog. St. John, said he, tells us, in the Apocalypse, that without the gates of the city, that is, out of the pale of the church, are dogs and sorcerers.

You must have a heart of adamant, cried my father, or you could not talk at this rate. It is a sign you do not know what it is to be a parent. If God were to have no more compassion than you, the case of my daughter would be deplorable indeed. Oh how did she declare on her knees before me at St. Omer's, that she would gladly lay down her life for my sake; and how did she pray me, for the sake of the dear Redeemer, not to desire her to do those things which it was impossible for her to do; and how did my son beseech us to have compassion on her, when we saw the anguish of her soul. I tell you, father, I have imbrued my hands in the blood of my child, and you are an accomplice in my guilt.

The priest was wise enough not to reply. He perceived, by my father's manner of speaking, that he was greatly moved, and that he himself was the principal object of his resentment. Indeed this priest had the entire keeping of his conscience; and he was hurried on to do what he did, contrary to his natural inclination. When my dear sister fled from St. Omer's, my father thought I had some hand in it. But when I solemnly and truly told him that I had not, and that I was ignorant whither she was gone,

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He told me he was fearful he should never see her again; and that if what had been done could be recalled, he would not desire her to take the veil contrary to her inclination. My father is a very humane man, and a tender and indulgent parent. It is greatly to be lamented, that the infinitely benevolent religion of the meek and lowly Jesus should be so far corrupted, as to make those who are naturally of an amiable temper the persecutors of the servants of Jesus. I must do father Albino the justice to say, that he is as tender and benevolent a man as any in the world, where religion is not concerned: but the least contradiction in that tender point greatly irritates him. He has, however, carried his point too far, and has thereby lost much of his influence over my father.

To-day my father asked my sister how Miss Barnwell came to be at Thomas Livingstone's.

Permit me, Sir, replied she, to tell you the truth. I was very ill while you were out; indeed I am far from being well now; and I entreated Miss Barnwell to visit me. She knew that she had offended you by corresponding with my dear sister: I could not persuade her therefore to stay after you came home.

My father rang instantly for the footman. John, said he, go to Thomas Livingstone's, and give my respects to Miss Barnwell, and desire her to be so kind as to come to my house.

Sir, said father Albino, I think you have had trouble enough through that heretic, without running a fresh hazard of having the minds of your children poisoned with her damnable doctrine.

The greatest calamity I ever met with, said my father, is the death of my dear child: and you, Sir, ought to know who it is that has been in a great measure the cause of it. This lady has her peculiar sentiments, as we have ours; but she could not be the intended enemy of my child. I was a witness of the grief with which she was filled at the news of her death. The pressure was so great, that nature sunk under the load. I tell you, Sir, I am, I must, I will be the friend of those who were friends to my dear child.

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When Miss Barnwell was come, my father apologized for not sending for her yesterday. He told her, that his grief was then so intense that he had not power to think of any thing; but that the affection she had manifested for his Eusebia would for ever endear her to him.

Miss Barnwell thanked him, and said that the affection between his daughter and her had been reciprocal, and that they had only parted a short time to meet again for ever.

Oh Miss Barnwell, said my father, if you and I and my dear child shall be so happy as to meet in the mansions of the blessed, we shall not engage in religious contention, which of all things I the most abhor. It is this which has influenced me to adhere to the good old way, in preference to novel opinions.

Pardon me, Sir, replied your niece, but I am confident neither you, nor Signior Albino, nor Miss Neville, knew any thing of Eusebia. She whom I had the honour to call my friend, was a humble follower of the Redeemer, so far as she understood his will; and I will venture to assert, that she held no novel opinion whatever.

Having said this, Miss Barnwell pulled out of her pocket the book which contained the correspondence between my sister and her friends, and gave it to my father. This, Sir, said she, belonged to your daughter; and it is the only thing that was saved from the wreck, except a small bundle which is at Thomas Livingstone's. You may now convince yourself that my invaluable friend, if she could not hold every sentiment you did, rejected them merely because they were new-fangled opinions, and confined herself to a few self-evident truths, none of which are less ancient than the time of the apostles. My father took the book very graciously, opened it, and, seeing it was her hand-writing, put it in his bosom, the tears trickling down his cheeks.

The colour rose in father Albino's face. Sir, said he with an imperious tone, the friendship I owe to you and your family obliges me to protest against your having any thing to do with heretical books. The fire is the place for those

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accursed writings, as well as for their authors. While I have a being I will not be awed into silence, where the cause of God, of his saints, and of his church, is concerned. I tell you, Sir, you show a weakness unworthy of a wise man, and much more so of a religious man, in the fondness which you manifest for one of God's most implacable enemies. If I thought that I had a drop of heretical blood in me, though it were in my heart, I would let it out.

My father is not given to wrath, except upon strong provocation. He looked sternly at the priest. Thou unfeeling monster, said he, henceforth I desire thee to herd among thy fellow savages, that delight in murder and blood. Wretch that thou art! Thou hast robbed me of my peace for ever. O that I should hearken to thy inhuman counsels! Thou hast been the murderer of my child. It has been entirely owing to such blood-thirsty creatures, that catholics have stunk in the nostrils of protestants. My dear child's reading concerning their cruelties was the reason, and the only reason, of her forsaking the religion of her ancestors.

I could not help pitying the poor priest, who wept like a child; and we all besought my father to moderate his resentment. No one felt more for him than Miss Barnwell. The dear girl wept when she saw his distress. I earnestly beg, Mr. Neville, said she, that there may be no misunderstanding between you and father Albino. I am certain that he means well, and that he thinks the honour of God is injured by the tenderness which you express for my friend. In a word, Miss Barnwell laboured so effectually to reconcile these two friends, that they shook hands, and it was promised on both sides that all which had passed should be buried in oblivion. Thus things rest at present. I have no doubt, Madam, but you will draw a favourable conclusion from what has passed, that our parent will not be inexorable when he knows that we are protestants. I daily pray that this may be the case, and that he himself may not only become a protestant, but also a true servant of Jesus Christ.

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My sister and Miss Barnwell desired me to give you a detail of what had passed since yesterday morning, when we received the afflictive news; to which I consented, as I shall esteem it no small happiness to be admitted into the number of your correspondents. My father, after reading the postscript of your letter, said he took it very kindly that Mrs. Worthington interested herself in his happiness; but above all, that you and every one were dear to him who esteemed his dear child; and that he would repay the expense you had been at in purchasing the bundle saved from the wreck, and ever gratefully remember the favour.

Your niece and my sister unite with me in the best wishes for your happiness.

Dear Madam, I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM NEVILLE.

LETTER XLVI.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

THE loss of my excellent friend very much indisposes me for writing; but as I know that my dear aunt will want to be informed how things are going on at the Abbey, I shall endeavour to give her all the satisfaction in my power. I have reason to bless God that all the respect is shown me here that I could wish for. Mr. William Neville is a modest, sensible, obliging man: he is indeed the very picture of Eusebia. There is in him, as there was in her, a sweet melancholy brooding upon his countenance, as well as a remarkable diffidence in his behaviour: yet he is sufficiently free and communicative among his friends, but never arrogant or assuming. His father treats me with great affability and tenderness; and even father Albino shows me uncommon respect.

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I was yesterday in the wilderness, a place sacred to the memory of Eusebia, and accidentally met father Albino. What a pity it is, cried he, that so amiable a lady as you should be out of the pale of the holy catholic church. I do not mean to offend you, Miss Barnwell: what better thing could I wish my most valuable friend? What a divine temper are you mistress of, to feel so compassionately, and even to find an excuse for one who you knew was your avowed enemy. Believe me, my dear young lady, I am your most sincere friend. You have bound me to you for ever; and I must and will esteem you while I have a being.

I am much obliged to you, Sir, replied I, and I am glad to find in you so ingenuous and grateful a temper. But why should you wish me to be a catholic? I would not take any trouble to make you a protestant. I wish you to be something infinitely better than that.

No! cried the father, full of surprise; would not you, who are so zealous a protestant, wish your friend to be a protestant, if you thought it the best religion?

I certainly do think it the best religion, answered I; yet I am ready to confess that many millions of protestants are not Christians. Why then should I endeavour to make you such a protestant? The truth is this; neither catholics nor protestants in general have the spirit of Christ.

Pray, Miss Barnwell, said he, do not you judge uncharitably?

No, Sir, replied I, by no means; it would not be charity to tell a sick man that he is well.

That seems reasonable, said he, but pray tell me how you came to be so wise as to be able to distinguish those who are Christians from those who are not?

It is not difficult, Sir, replied I, to answer your question; but you will neither understand nor believe me when I do answer it. However, as you are so candid as to hear me patiently, I will speak as intelligibly as I can. Our Lord told his disciples that all his children should be taught of

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God. He who is so taught is separated from the world, and a different spirit is given him: he is indeed a new man. Such a person can discern both those who are in his former state, and those who are in his present: and although there may be some few difficult cases wherein he may judge wrong, yet even in such cases, if he keep the rule in view which our Lord has given for that purpose, he will judge as he ought to judge. We can know men only by their fruits. If therefore I were to see a thorn bring forth grapes, I ought to esteem it a vine, until time and experience convinced me that they were not its natural fruit.

I confess, Madam, said he, that you have answered very well. But as you lay claim to the gift of discerning spirits, I have a favour to ask, which is, that you will as a friend sincerely and honestly tell me whether you think me to be a believer or an unbeliever? I give you my word that nothing you may say shall offend me.

The children of God, replied I, know that they are passed from death unto life, because they love his character, and love his saints. You therefore, Sir, ought to conclude that you are yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, because you have persecuted one of his children, and occasioned her death; one who truly esteemed you, and offered many prayers mixed with tears for your happiness, as well as for the happiness of the rest of her friends.

The poor gentleman was greatly moved. He cried out, with hands lifted up, and with tears in his eyes, I have done my patron's child much injury, beside being the indirect cause of her death. I have not been actuated by the spirit of Christ. Like Saul, I have persecuted Christ. God be merciful to me. I beseech you to pray for me.

I hope, Sir, replied I, that God has given you repentance unto life.

Alas, cried he, my sins are of infinite magnitude.

Suppose that were really the case, said I, there would be no necessity for despair. The price paid by the Re-

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deemer was an infinite price; so that notwithstanding sin has abounded, grace has much more abounded. If you think that you are the greatest of sinners, you only think as other sinners have thought. But, Sir, have you not had some thoughts concerning these things before to-day?

Yes, Miss Barnwell, answered he, very many, I assure you. My conscience frequently smote me when that excellent lady, whose death I have occasioned, conversed with me. I was, however, so exasperated against all those whom I then thought to be heretics, that I stifled every conviction. But since her father accused me of being the cause of her death, I have not enjoyed a moment's peace: and your kind interposition in my favour brought afresh to my mind the divine philanthropy of that excellent young lady, whose kindness seemed to increase in the same proportion as I persecuted her. Oh, Madam, I perceive myself to be as different from you and her, as a wolf is from a lamb: and the undisguised truth is this; I came into the wilderness on purpose to converse with you.

I told father Albino, that if God should mercifully cause him to be a real Christian, he would most probably be thereby exposed to many evils in this world, from the resentment of Mr. Neville especially.

Do you think it necessary then, my dear friend, said he, that I should become a protestant, in order to become a Christian? Are there no catholics who are Christians?

You will find it necessary, replied I, to regulate your conduct by the New Testament. If you should find in that divine book the Roman catholic religion, I do not advise you to abandon the church of Rome. I do not wish you to leave that church any further than she has left the apostles.

How forcible, cried the old gentleman, are right words! With the divine assistance I will take your advice, and endeavour to learn what I fear I have not yet learned, the first principles of the oracles of God. And O thou Fountain of light, I beseech thee for the sake of thy holy Child Jesus, to dispel my darkness. To this I replied, I pray that God may hear and answer your prayer.

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My friends were agreeably surprised when I related this conversation. They unite in love to you with,

My dear aunt,

Your dutiful and
Affectionate Niece,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XLVII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR NIECE,

I RECEIVED Mr. William Neville's letter, and also yours. Please to tell that gentleman that his correspondence will afford me great pleasure.

What short-sighted creatures we are! I dreaded the consequence when Mr. Neville should know that his son and daughter were protestants. But things now, I thank God, wear a promising aspect; for that gentleman seems to view persecution, which is the most horrid part of popery, in its true light.

I also thank God on account of what you have related concerning father Albino. I hope he has been renewed by divine grace; for that only is able to make the wolf dwell peaceably with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid. This is the man who but a fortnight ago breathed hatred and malice against the saints of the most High. God has touched this lofty mountain, and has levelled it with the lowest valley. We may say to the proudest sinner, and to every thing that opposes the cause of the Redeemer, *Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.* Many have I seen who were exceedingly furious, and even mad, against the ways and people of God, whom in the midst of their career an arrow from the divine quiver has smitten, and who have immediately laid down their arms, and become the reverse of what they were before. Paul was a remarkable in-

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stance of God's acting in this sovereign way; and in all his writings he took abundant care that succeeding ages should know that he beheld himself in that light. I do not say that no real Christian can be an Arminian; but he must be a very inconsistent one, if it is indeed true, that we are saved by the obedience of the Son of God. I say obedience; since his sufferings are a part of that obedience, and indeed the finishing part. It is nevertheless true, that all who perish where the gospel is preached, will have only to blame their own depravity, which showed itself in their voluntary neglect or rejection of the Saviour.

Since I wrote the above, Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell have arrived here. I have received many favours from your father; I therefore invited them to be at my house, to which they consented. I am sorry to tell my dear niece, that I see no tokens of good in either of them. Her mind is wholly taken up about places of diversion and amusement, and how to adorn that body which will in a short time be the food of worms.

I asked your father whether you were at home?

No, Madam, replied he, I dare say you know that: nor do I wish to see her there, unless I could have my own daughter again. I have heard of children's being changed in the cradle, but never before of their being changed after they were nineteen or twenty years old; and yet that is the case with my foolish girl. I cannot forgive her. Indeed I shall never forgive her: she knew how much I abhorred all canting and whining about religion. My daughter? she is none of my daughter; she has not a drop of my blood in her veins, or she would not have gone into a conventicle; a mere barn, with a few forms in it, and a tub turned upside down for a rostrum. I will take an oath that I heard either that it was a tub, or no better than a tub.

I will take your word, Sir, replied I; it is not an affair of sufficient importance to require an oath.

Nay, Madam, replied he, I must beg leave to differ from you. Is no regard to be paid to decorum? Was it

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proper that my daughter should herd with the scum of the earth.

Indeed, Madam, cried Mrs. Barnwell, it was a meeting to which no persons of fashion resorted; none but low-bred people; so that I do not wonder at Mr. Barnwell's being so angry.

Were you not a dissenter, Madam? said I.

Yes, replied she, but that was a very different affair; the most respectable tradesmen in the town went to our meeting. Mr. Pine I dare say is worth forty thousand pounds: dont you think he is, Mr. Barnwell?

He is undoubtedly very rich, answered he. And I have often said that in market towns, and great trading places, where they have a genteel place of worship, and a good salary for a reputable minister, I do not blame persons for going to meeting, especially if they were born dissenters; for I think every one ought to go where he was brought up.

Your father is come to town about his chancery-suit. By what I can learn he is not very sanguine that it will terminate in his favour; and if it should not, the loss of this estate, and a little assistance from his wife, may put it out of his power to do much for you, even if he had the inclination. I esteem it no small mercy, my dear child, that God has put it in my power to supply the place of a parent to you. I shall long to hear how affairs go on at Thornton Abbey. Pray remember my kind love to all the servants of our divine master there.

I am, my dear niece,

Your affectionate aunt,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XLVIII.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I THANK you for your kind letter. I have indeed small expectations from my father. As I continue to receive

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much respect from Mr. Neville and his family, I think I shall stay here some time longer. When I remove, I intend to accept my dear aunt's invitation.

In reading your conversation with my father, sorrow and joy took possession of me alternately. Sorrow, that so near a relative should not only be a stranger, but an enemy to the Redeemer; and joy, that God in sovereign mercy should call me to the knowledge of himself, notwithstanding I am sprung from one who is a stranger to the covenant of promise. When the temple of God shall be finished, every stone in the building, as well as the headstone, will ascribe it entirely to the grace of the almighty Architect, that it was chosen out of the common quarry, and fashioned for the intended use, in preference to other stones of equal goodness. May I always remember with self-abasement the rock whence I was hewn, and the hole of the pit whence I was digged.

With regard to my father's estate, I should look upon it as a happy thing for him to lose it, if that were to be a mean in the hand of Providence of making him seek the true riches. Nothing used to give me more pain than to hear him value himself upon his being a gentleman. Alas! what a poor prerogative it is for the offspring of God, for immortals, to live in a large house, and to wear clothes made of fine wool or linen, and this for only sixty or seventy years. I have not mentioned their living without labour, and eating and drinking much more than nature requires; because these things ought to be considered as curses rather than blessings. O my God! may I and all thy servants rather glory in the cross of Christ, and in all that infamy which attends the confession of thy name.

You wish to hear, Madam, how we go on at the Abbey. I have conversed with father Albino several times since I wrote last, and I hope with good effect. I have chiefly endeavoured to prove out of the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ, the only Saviour; and also that it is the employment of Satan, under the disguise of an angel of light, to substitute in the room of the perfect obedience of Christ,

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and of that atonement which he made for sin, a religion of which the love of God makes no part. Notwithstanding, continued I, the helpless condition of man since the fall, and that it is now impossible for him to live by his own righteousness, yet the enemy of souls, continually labours to make him build a Babel that will reach to heaven, thereby endeavouring to render the mediatorial work of Christ of no effect.

He asked me what I thought of the monks and nuns in their church.

I told him, that the way of life followed by those people, if it be viewed in the most favourable light, must be considered as an endeavour to approach the divine presence in a different way from that which has been appointed; and that notwithstanding the name of Christ is not entirely omitted in their religion, yet in general, as well as among protestants, it is only used as an auxiliary to their own inventions.

He then asked my opinion concerning purgatory.

I answered, that that also was invented to supersede the redemption which is by Christ Jesus, by pretending that it is possible for sinners to be purged from their guilt by their own sufferings.

My dear friend, cried he, what you have told me I know to be the truth. Where have I been, and what have I been doing all my life time?

You have been doing Sir, replied I, that which millions of men called Christians do all their days. But it is your infinite mercy that God has stopped you in your career, while thousands around you are left in blindness and unbelief.

Miss Barnwell, said he, you will insensibly lead me to believe the doctrines of election and reprobation, which I have looked upon to be so dishonourable to God, that I have frequently thought I could sooner become an atheist than believe them. They have always appeared to me to be unworthy of a merciful God, and discouraging to poor sinners.

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Their being discouraging to sinners, Sir, replied I, is in my humble opinion an excellency; since they only discourage them from seeking to be justified by their own righteousness. They discourage no one from coming to God for mercy, as the prodigal went to his father, or from crying out with the publican, God be merciful to me a sinner. It is indeed a certain truth that the elect only will be saved; but then it is also equally certain that whosoever believes the gospel, and applies to God for mercy, will be saved.

The judge of the whole earth, said he, must do the thing that is right. Vain man would be wise and independent of his Creator. How little did I think that I should stoop to be taught by the daughter of Mr Barnwell! God has determined that the loftiness of man shall be made low. Had I known but half what I do now, I should not have persecuted that amiable young lady. But God has taken her to himself: henceforth may it be my ambition to follow her to the regions of immortality.

I can say but little concerning Mr. Neville. He frequently rides about the fields, or walks in the wilderness. He speaks but seldom, seems averse to company, and when in the house is chiefly in his study. The loss of his daughter is a stroke which he is scarcely able to bear. When he hears that his son and daughter, as well as his priest, have left the church of Rome, it is impossible to foresee what will be the consequence. Mr. William Neville and his sister desire their kind respects to you, as does,

Dear Madam, your affectionate niece,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER XLIX.

From Signior Albino to Mr. Neville.

MY VERY DEAR PATRON,

I DID not think the time would ever arrive when I should dread a verbal communication of any thing I should have

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to say to you; yet that is now the case. You have blamed me with too much reason for being the cause of your daughter's death: a daughter who had not her equal in the world; the guilt, the shame, and the sorrow, will be for ever mine.

O my dear friend, if you did but know how much I have suffered on that account, you would think me an object of your compassion. Alas, the deed is done never to be recalled, and I can only pray that the sin may not be laid to my charge!

My thoughts concerning that excellent young lady are the reverse of what they were. When the truths of God flowed from her lips, my heart was as hard as adamant, and my ears were like those of the deaf adder that will not attend to the voice of the charmer.

You wished me, Sir, to read the correspondence between her and her friends, that I might be the more able to judge concerning the everlasting state of your justly beloved child. I acknowledge to my shame, that I complied with your request with a determination to reprobate every thing which it contained, entertaining no doubt of the truth of my own sentiments, and of the fallacy and damnable nature of theirs.

I accordingly read the whole and some of the letters several times over: but how shall I relate the effect? I can never forget it. I soon perceived that my confidence had been equalled only by my ignorance; and that, with the malice and rage of an infernal spirit, I have been crucifying Christ afresh in the person of my own child; for so I esteemed your angelic daughter.

I have no doubt, Sir, that you will, yea, that you have forgiven me: but I shall never forgive myself. Mine is a crime of the blackest dye; and I should have been entirely without hope of forgiveness, if the providence of God had not informed me, through the same medium, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. I have been stripped of all my former confidence, and now lie as a beggar at the door of divine mercy. I ought to confess that it is doubtful whether I possess one sentiment of a religious

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kind that I entertained before. Even the God I adored was the creature of my own imagination. It becomes me not, therefore, to expect better treatment from you, than your excellent child received from me. *With what measure ye mete*, said our Lord, *it shall be measured to you again.*

I cannot contemplate religious establishments without horror. Christianity could never have been so corrupted, had it not been for the bloody alliance between church and state. Since I read the correspondence, I have read the New Testament, and am amazed that I could think myself a Christian. O thou despised Son of God, what reason hast thou to be ashamed of me, and of millions who are called by thy name; Christians without thy spirit; Christians, ignorant of thy truth, ignorant of the first principles of thy soul-reviving religion! What would I not do, what would I not suffer, if my friend could but see with my new eyes! Though an old man, I am become a child. I am learning the rudiments of Christianity. Hitherto I have been a cumberer of the ground;—an enemy to God, to Christ, to his Spirit, to his word, to his children. I ought to abhor myself in dust and ashes.

Having been called at the eleventh hour out of Egypt, Babylon, and Sodom, to labour in the Lord's vineyard, I am under the greatest obligation to spend my little remaining time in glorifying him. The sacred volume shall be my only guide. Henceforth I will not engage in any religious worship which is not clearly pointed out in the New Testament. Only prove to me, my dear Sir, that any doctrine is taught, or any practice commanded in the oracles of truth, or that any form of church government is recorded in the New Testament to have been used by the apostles, and you shall find me all submission. I lately thought that I knew every thing, and that wisdom would die with me. I now desire to sit at the feet of the Saviour, and to learn of him.

It is not every one who saith to the Redeemer, Lord, Lord, that will enter into the kingdom of heaven; nor indeed any but those who do the will of their Father who is

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in heaven. If you should ask me where that will is revealed, or who has made it known, almighty truth obliges me to confess, that we shall in vain look for it in the decrees of popes or of general councils, or even in the fathers, and still less in tradition; for I am convinced that these have all of them not only contradicted one another, but themselves likewise.

The will of God, as it respects the faith and obedience of a Christian, is no where to be found pure and uncorrupted except in the Scriptures: and there the way to the heavenly Canaan is delineated so plainly that the wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein.

What would I not give to have my friend see things as I do now? I pray continually for him, and that is all I can do.

We have been educated in the bosom of error. There certainly is a way which seemeth right unto a man; that way we have trodden from our youth; but the end thereof are the ways of death.

What but the power of God could have overcome my prejudice? That power could do it. When he works, the most obstinate resistance is like setting up thorns and briars to oppose the progress of a devouring fire.

I could not but write what I have written. I am at Mr. Grove's. If I do not there receive a letter of consolation, I do not know that I shall dare to see you or your family any more. I am, my ever dear patron,

Your sincere friend,

And very humble servant,

ANTONIO ALBINO.

LETTER I.

From Mr. Neville to Father Albino.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your letter, but never was more surprised than when I read it. Is this, said I, that heroic cham-

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pion of the catholic church, who if he thought he had a drop of heretical blood in his heart would let it out? How unstable a thing is man! Well might my dear angel say to her persecuting sister, when she reproached her for changing her sentiments, It is not for mortals to say what they will do, or what they will be.

I have been again reading the correspondence between my child and her friends. It breathes a divine spirit. O what a child I once had! She was an unfit companion for you and me. She walked with God, like Enoch; and he has taken her from a world which was unworthy of her. It is a sad consideration, that, like the kind and dutiful daughter of Jephthah, she should fall a sacrifice to the superstition of her own father. Her friends too are different persons from what I expected. I have hitherto looked upon protestants either as enthusiasts, or as men destitute of religion; but it is wrong to judge of people in the gross. There are persons among them whose understanding and piety greatly exceed any thing I am acquainted with in our own church. We have, it is true, many whose zeal has led them to practise austerity and self-denial; but my child would have told me, that mortification of the flesh is no part of holiness, unless it be practised in obedience to the divine precepts. And who can contradict this? The catholic religion is sadly corrupted. One person has made one addition to divine revelation, and another has made another, till the simple truth has been choked and smothered among the weeds. The annexing of princely revenues to the profession of Christianity, has excited worldly-minded men to struggle for the emoluments of the church; and when they have come into office, the doctrines of the gospel have been corrupted to their carnal taste, and an ostentatious ceremonious religion has taken place of the plain, unadorned religion of Jesus Christ. This is what my dear Eusebia often told us, and the same obvious truth is often repeated in the correspondence between her and her friends. Genuine Christianity must not be expected to flourish in a national church. It is no wonder that an es-

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tablished clergy should generally consist of worldly-minded men, whose grand object of inquiry is, what may be gained by religion in this world, and not how they and their hearers may be saved in the world to come.

How glad should I be if my son and daughter were what their dear sister was. I hope God will continue to make Miss Barnwell a blessing to my family. It was a kind providence that Maria sent for her when she was ill. I have heard of the treatment she has received from her father; but I have no room to reproach him. However, I ought to be a father to her, especially as I am certain my dear Eusebia, if she were alive, would wish me to act in that manner.

You seem to have written with fear and trembling; but your letter was the most welcome one I ever received from you. I need not add to the above that I shall be glad to see you.

I am, my good friend,
Most sincerely yours,
JAMES NEVILLE.

LETTER LI.

From Mr. William Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

IT is with great pleasure I inform you of a fresh instance of the goodness of God to me and my friends, because I know you will rejoice with me.

Yesterday my father and I were alone. I am continually thinking, said he, of your dear sister. I look at the places where I used to behold her, and immediately her lovely image presents itself to my view. I think I see her just as she was at St. Omer's, when on her knees she besought me for the love of Christ to have compassion on her. I was deaf to her entreaties and her tears. O that I had made my bed in the ocean with her! But the right-

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ous Judge of the earth has reserved me to suffer the punishment of my iniquity. My dear son, what do you think of the state of your sister? I hope you think her salvation possible, notwithstanding she died out of the pale of the church.

It afforded me great pleasure that my father began a discourse of this kind with me when we were alone. I was anxious to inform him that I was a protestant, yet wished to do it by slow degrees, as I found him able to bear it. I therefore answered, that I had no doubt that the soul of my sister was in the divine presence, among the spirits of the just, and that I did not believe she did die out of the church.

Not out of the church? said he; what evidence have you of that?

If, Sir, answered I, we suppose the church of Christ to be composed of his faithful servants, as undoubtedly it is, my sister, being one of them, must consequently be a member of his church.

This appears to be good reasoning, said my father: but then have we not hitherto erred in supposing the church of Rome to be the only true church?

Have not you, Sir, replied I, often told us that some abuses have crept into the church of Rome, the amendment of which is rather to be desired than expected? Her assertion that she is the only true church of Christ, I must confess I have long considered as an abuse of truth.

What, said my father, have you long considered it in that light, or only since you conversed with your sister at St. Omer's?

It was my sentiment, Sir, replied I, long before I knew that it was her's.

I am glad of it, said my father; for it is an important truth, that all the servants of Jesus are his church; wherever they may be scattered, or by whatever name they may be known.

I now perceived that my dear parent had read your and Miss Barnwell's correspondence with my sister. I there-

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fore told him it was to be lamented that he had not perceived so great a truth before, since it was a capital article wherein he had differed from my dear sister.

Ah, my son, replied he, I wish I could recall one month: I should then be happy But it is gone for ever.

I hope, Sir, said I, you will yet be happy: what you have done I know was with the very best intent.

That is a poor excuse, replied he, except my intention had been regulated by God's word, or I had lived where the oracles of truth are unknown. In either of those cases the goodness of the intention would in some measure have palliated the action. But it was otherwise with me. God's mind and will are revealed in his word. This word was in my hand, and I ought to have acquainted myself with it, and to have submitted to it without reserve.

Your observation, Sir, is just, replied I; but as it is impossible to recall what is past, the only thing which remains is, for each of us to pray for the divine illumination, and, in dependence on God, to endeavour to lay aside our former prejudices, and to learn the whole of our faith and practice from his revealed will. Without doubt we may receive helps from other quarters: but we are commanded to call no man on earth father or master in these respects, nor to follow him one step further than he is a follower of Christ.

O my son, replied my honoured parent, taking my hand and pressing it to his lips, thou art a blessing to my declining years. I only wish that I had profited by the modest hints thou gavest me in thy letters from St. Omer's, of the immoral lives of catholics, of that corruption which has crept into the church by slow degrees, and of the necessity which there is that religious societies should frequently recur to first principles. The faith and practice of a Christian are no where so clearly delineated as in God's word: henceforth may it be the business of me and mine to draw living water from those wells of salvation.

I was greatly affected at this discourse. I have no

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doubt that my dear parent has profited by reading the correspondence between you, Madam, Miss Barnwell, and my sister; but I desire to ascribe the glory to the divine Being, without whose almighty energy no instruction can be of any avail.

We had much conversation beside what I have related. He told me of the amazing change that had taken place in the mind of Signior Albino, and also asked me whether I had had any religious conversation with Maria. I thought this a proper time to relate the whole without reserve. I told him the reason of my sister's sending for Miss Barnwell, and gave him copies of the letters which had passed between you, Miss Barnwell, and Maria, in his absence. He read them with great emotion, a tear now and then stealing down his cheek. My son, said he, I thank you for being so unreserved, and I thank God for the great mercy shown to my family: it is infinitely more than I deserve. I perceive that Maria was prepared to suffer for the sake of Christ; and if God had not stopped me by the way, as he did Saul, my fellow-persecutor, it is probable I should have treated each of you as I did your dear sister. There is Miss Barnwell, continued he, who is a sufferer for holding faith and a good conscience; I cannot consistently reproach her father, but with God's leave I will be a father to her.

I blushed; and the more I endeavoured to conceal my emotion, the less able I was to succeed.

Williams, said my father, thou hast a face that will speak the truth. What may I not conjecture from those blushes?

I confessed that I had a regard for that lady on many accounts, but chiefly because she was a servant of Jesus Christ. I said that I had, however, determined not to go one step further than esteem, without first acquainting him.

My father replied, that that was a becoming resolution; and that children could not show greater marks of folly and disrespect to their parents, than by fixing their affec-

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tions and making overtures without their knowledge. You have made, added he, a proper choice. This young lady will have little or no fortune. If you also had none, that would be an objection to your union, as you have both been unused to labour. But as you, my son, will have a sufficiency, I do not perceive any thing which is likely to be a bar to your mutual happiness.

Undoubtedly, Sir, answered I, there is always a necessity for the exercise of prudence. Yet the man who already possesses wealth equal to the sphere in which he desires to move, ought to make a fortune with a wife the last and the least consideration. Miss Barnwell loves God, and is grateful, humble, sincere, modest, and discreet. She would neither be elated by prosperity, nor depressed by adversity. She is careful and diligent; not a waster, nor fond of that fantastical levity which characterizes the women of the present day. These qualifications, I humbly apprehend, are the best portion a man can have with a wife. On the contrary, if a woman be destitute of the fear of God; if she be proud, ignorant, and vain; and if she cannot find any happiness in her own family, but from an idle indolent habit, spends one part of her time in dress, and the other in sauntering like the butterfly from place to place, no fortune can compensate for her defects.

The present mode of educating children, said my father, is not calculated to make them good husbands or wives; and indeed we cannot but perceive that all ranks, from the palace to the cottage, have adopted such a luxurious and expensive way of living, that every one seems to vie with his neighbour who shall be most extravagant. We ought not to wonder that so many gentlemen spend their estates, and that there are such numerous failures in trade. If a person will live to the extent of his income, no provision is made against the misfortunes which are liable to befall him; and which therefore will probably plunge him into inextricable difficulties. Extremes are bad: the golden mean ought to be preserved. Every person ought to live below

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his income, without running into sordid avarice on the one hand, or profuse prodigality on the other.

My father added, that he believed Miss Barnwell to be possessed of every qualification necessary to constitute a good wife. But then, said he, are you certain that this lady is not already engaged? Or if she be not, do you know whether she could esteem you?

No, Sir, replied I, I know neither the one nor the other. But being thus favoured with your approbation, I will endeavour to learn both from her own mouth.

I soon went to your excellent niece, and had some conversation with her. I please myself with the hope that she will not reject me. She has formed a prudent determination not to take one step in a business of this kind without your approbation, nor without asking the consent of her father. It is by her permission that I write to you on the subject. My dear Miss Barnwell and my sister unite in most sincere respects to you with

Dear Madam,

Your very humble servant,

WILLIAM NEVILLE.

LETTER LII.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I GAVE you an account in my last of the great change in Signior Albino. I have every day more and more reason to believe that he has passed from death unto life. He is remarkably humble, and diffident of himself, and laments continually his being the cause, though indirectly, of the death of our dear friend. He told Mr. William Neville yesterday, that nothing less than the consideration of the infinite dignity of the person of Christ, his spotless purity, and perfect atonement, could have kept him from de-

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I now, said he, remember the many things your sister said concerning the excellence of the knowledge of Jesus, and, when I look back, am amazed that I should be as ignorant as a heathen, with the oracles of God in my hand.

I know, Madam, it will give you great pleasure to hear that Mr. Neville has read our correspondence with his daughter; and that he has acknowledged to me that he believed the truth to be with us, and that he has hitherto put darkness for light, and light for darkness. There are many things, however, to which he can with difficulty assent; and yet he does not know how to deny them.

I remarked, that if the sublime truths of the gospel were agreeable to our native sentiments as fallen creatures, they would not stand in need of being impressed upon the heart by the mighty power of God. I instanced in the divinity of Christ, and endeavoured to show that men of science and erudition, who are accustomed to think closely upon every subject, if they profess themselves Christians, naturally fall into Arianism, or Socinianism; it being contrary to the reasoning of depraved creatures that the everlasting Jehovah should come into this world at all, if we consider the small proportion which it bears to the solar system, and yet more so when we consider its nothingness in comparison of the universe. But, added I, when the Scriptures assert, not only that the most High came into our world, but that he was united to our nature, and that in that nature he expired on the cross, we are not to wonder that philosophers and thinking men should call these hard sayings, and difficult to be believed, or that they should strain every nerve to make revelation speak what is agreeable to their preconceived notions. Mr. Neville acknowledged the justice of my remark, and told me that he had had a good deal of conversation with his son and daughter, which indeed I already knew, and that he unexpectedly but agreeably found they had embraced every sentiment of their sister.

I have now to relate to my dear aunt an event in which the happiness of my life is considerably involved. Last night Mr. William Neville found me in his sister's closet,

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After some conversation concerning the wonderful religious change which has taken place in the family, and after saying many obliging things to me, as he has likewise done at former times, he asked my permission to pay me his addresses. I blushed, and could not at first reply. After I had recovered a little from my confusion I said, that I was greatly obliged to him for his favourable opinion of me, and for his regard for an orphan almost destitute of friends, and entirely destitute of fortune; that my aunt however had treated me with such parental and Christian tenderness, and felt such an interest in my happiness, that I could not make any answer till I had written to her; nor till my father also had been applied to; for that my duty to him was not cancelled by his unkind treatment of me.—To the propriety of these things Mr. Neville fully assented.

It is unnecessary for me to conceal from you, my dear aunt, that I have for some time felt an uncommon regard for this amiable man. I struggled with my feelings, and endeavoured to persuade myself that it was nothing more than respect. If Mr. Neville had said nothing to me on the subject, I hope and believe that with the divine assistance my affection would have been kept within due bounds by my judgment; but if that gentleman is to be my husband, it will no longer be my duty to repress it. And yet, now that he has disclosed his regard for me, I feel a strange kind of revolt, for which I do not know how to account, and which I cannot describe.

I told Mr. Neville, that I did not doubt but he had previously mentioned it to his father. He replied, that his father gave his most cordial consent, and spoke of me in the highest terms of affection and respect.

I promised that I would write to you upon the subject; and that I would at the same time request you to write to my father, without disclosing to him the name of the gentleman, or any thing concerning him, for which I said there would be no necessity, as his total unconcern about me would render him indifferent about the whole matter.

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You will have the goodness, Madam, to do this, and to inform me of the result. If my dear aunt shall approve of the connexion into which I am likely to enter, it will be an additional happiness to

Her most affectionate niece,
MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER LIII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR NIECE,

I HAVE received your letter, and that of Mr. William Neville. The reason of my not having written before is, because I have been put so much out of my way that I have had but little comfort for this fortnight past. Your father has always been so very obliging to me, that I could do no less than ask him to be at my house. If he had been by himself, I could have done very well; but Mrs. Barnwell and I are so different in almost every thing, that I dare say she has had no more satisfaction in my company than I have had in hers.

One evening or two that Mr. Barnwell and she did not go to the play were spent at my house. She wanted very much to make a party at cards; but I told her plainly there was no books of that kind in my library. Your father understood me, and said, I thought, Madam, you had possessed more liberal sentiments than to imagine with the vulgar that cards are the devil's books. I beg you will tell me what harm there is in playing a game at cards, any more than in taking a walk, or using any other recreation: there can be nothing unholy in paint and pasteboard. Besides, I know many religious people who have no objection to a harmless game at cards.

I have no doubt of it, Sir, said I: but then it is to be feared that there are many religious people who will not

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be admitted into heaven. The evil of cards does not proceed from the materials of which they are made. They cause us to mis-spend much precious time, which might be better employed in profitable conversation. They also encourage a spirit of covetousness, by making persons anxious to win the property of their neighbours; and are frequently the occasion of indirect means being used for that purpose: the first is a breach of the tenth commandment, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods; and the last is a species of fraud bordering on robbery. For the same reason my husband would have nothing to do with lotteries, saying, that if God intended he should be rich, he had no doubt but he would direct him to such a way of acquiring wealth as would be conducive to his own glory and the good of society.

But to return from this digression, Mrs. Barnwell thought cheating at cards a very venial sin indeed. What had people their eyes for? and the address of a good player was only conspicuous by his cheating cleverly, and without detection. Ah, cried your father laughing, all gamesters are Spartans in that respect: they think there is no crime in robbery, but that all the guilt consists in being detected.

When your father and I were alone, I told him that you had some expectation of proposals of marriage, and asked him what he intended to do for you. He replied, that if you had behaved well, and had accepted of Mr. Clifford, as he advised and even commanded you to do, he would have done something handsome; but that he had been at great expenses since his marriage, and might possibly have a small family. It would be out of his power, therefore, to do any thing in his lifetime, and he would promise nothing afterward; that should be as you behaved.

I asked him whether he would give his consent to your marriage, if proposals should be made. O yes, he said, by all means; you knew you had his consent to be or do or go what or where you would. I am sorry, said I, that you should possess so little regard for your child. I can assure you, however, that she has a dutiful and affectionate

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regard for you; and it is at her request that I have proposed the matter for your approbation. She may do what she pleases, answered he; I shall give myself no trouble about her.

Well, my dear Miranda, the promise of God is remarkably made good to you, that when your father and mother forsake you, then the Lord will take you up. I was this day reading the case of Solomon, on whom, when he chose wisdom, God not only conferred that gift, but also every other inferior mercy; and I could not help thinking the case of my dear child exceedingly similar. She chose the fear of the Lord, which is the true wisdom, and did not think it any hardship to lodge and board in a poor cottage; and behold, He who has the property of this and every other world in his possession, is exalting her far above what she would have had reason to expect if her father had given her all his possessions.

I rejoice that Mr. Neville and Signior Albino are so far brought to the knowledge of the truth. I trust that he who has begun the good work will carry it on.

I hope, my dear child, that you look back with wonder and gratitude upon the kind providence of God, by which you have been guarded and preserved all the days of your life; and I trust that if you should be so happy as to be the wife of Mr. William Neville, you will gratefully remember the humble state from which he shall have called you, and endeavour by a frugal, discreet, and wise management in your family, to make some compensation for your want of fortune. There are too many instances in which young women, exalted from a state of poverty to a state of affluence, have been the worst of wives. Pride has made them giddy, and has caused them to run headlong into almost every excess: yea, they have frequently become vain on account of their imagined excellence, which they have had no other ground for supposing themselves to be possessed of than because their husbands took them without fortunes. I cannot forbear saying that Mrs. Barnwell manifests too much of this disposition; for notwithstanding

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your father married her without a shilling, and he is now engaged in an extensive chancery-suit, she spares for no expense. She has done little else but go from one shop to another. I have been obliged to see all her cheap pennyworths; for if I could have believed her, she understood every thing so well, that she got the tradesmen's goods for less than they cost. It was with much reluctance she left London yesterday. The country, said she, is a wretched dull place: it is fit for nothing but to make people melancholy. For my part, I am surprised that any people of condition can bear to live among a herd of rustics.—I should not have mentioned one of these particulars (for Mrs. Barnwell is far from being singular) had it not been with a view of directing you to sail a contrary course.

I shall conclude with giving you a caution. Mr. Neville and his son speak very complaisant things to you, and of you. Beware, my child, lest you be intoxicated with praise; for it is frequently poison poured into the ear, which contaminates and pollutes the soul. You have many excellencies; but I doubt not you have many defects. Learn therefore more and more not to think of yourself above what you ought to think. Pray give my kind respects to Mr. William Neville and his sister, and Thomas and Mary Livingstone. I am, my dear niece,

Your affectionate aunt,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER LIV.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I RECEIVED your affectionate letter, and was sorry to hear that my mother was so disagreeable to you: but I expected to hear nothing better concerning her. She is certainly an expensive woman, and thereby does herself an injury; since she is wasting that which in all probabi-

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lity she will need for her family. With regard to the severe speeches of my father, I am only sorry for his sake. It was predicted that parents would hate their children on the Redeemer's account, which is a strong proof of our natural enmity against God, or which is the same, against his gospel. But I have reason to bless God for his great goodness to me; and I hope that the many renewed instances of his mercy will enable me to trust him in the darkest dispensations.

I am not the less obliged to you, Madam, but it was unnecessary to ask my father to give me a fortune. I showed Mr. William Neville your letter, and he told me he would accept nothing from Mr. Barnwell but his daughter, and that he should think her a princely donation. I begged him to consider the caution in your letter, and told him, that I believed many a wife had been spoiled in courtship. The men, said I, endeavour to make them believe they are goddesses, and to persuade them how much they are devoted to their service. And when the matrimonial knot is tied, whatever the woman may have promised concerning honour and obedience to him who is now become her head, yet having been acknowledged a superior being, and the reins of government being put into her hands, she frequently, like other monarchs, will not lay them down again but per force.

I believe, Miss Barnwell, replied he, that what you say is true, and that it is dangerous to administer food to the pride either of ourselves or others. But I know that my dear girl will consider that I view her bright side only, and that all the praise I bestow upon her is in consequence of my comparing her with her fellow-mortals. She will compare herself with the divine law, which requires her to love the Lord her God with all her heart, and with all her soul, and her neighbour as herself; and then I will venture to say she will find no room to be proud.

Last night, when we were all together, Signior Albino told us he had read the correspondence a third time, with great care, and he believed without prejudice, and that he

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is convinced the arguments against the catholic religion, merely as a national religion, are conclusive. But, added he, as it is not in this country the national religion, we have nothing to do but to leave out every thing, both in doctrine and in ceremonies, which has been added by the caprice of men, and which has no clear foundation in the word of God.

And this, in fact, said Mr. Neville, will be doing nothing more than many sensible and pious catholics have supposed ought to be done. They despaired of its ever being done, because they thought it must be the work of such a multitude of persons, erroneously taking it for granted that a part could not be reformed without the whole. But surely it is right for us to do what we ought, let others do what they may.

We all cried out that we were willing to be catholics upon this condition. It was agreed, therefore, that till we should have an opportunity of closely examining the New Testament, our worship in public, in the family, and in private, should be as simple as possible; and that we would rather be obliged to add what we might perceive to be necessary, than be forced to lop off luxuriances.

Mr. Neville desired that so good a work might be begun that evening, asking the opinion of his son in what manner it should be conducted.

I think, Sir, answered he, it would not be improper to read two or three chapters out of the Old and New Testament, and to conclude with prayer. This was the practice of a friend of mine in France.

Should the prayer be with a form, or without one? said father Albino.

Without one, Sir, in my opinion, answered Mr. William Neville; for we have many accounts in the word of God of prayer without a form, but not one instance of praying with one.

This was acknowledged by all; and my dear friend, at his father's request, began with reading the first chapter of Genesis, and the first and second chapters of Matthew, in-

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tending to go through the whole in order. He concluded with a short, but solemn and pathetic prayer, in which he blessed God for opening our blind eyes, unstopping our deaf ears, and bringing us out of darkness into his marvellous light; and prayed that he would perfect the mercy begun, and that he would give us his Spirit to lead us into all truth. He acknowledged our sins, and implored mercy in the name of Jesus Christ. And he finished with praying for all the subjects of Christ's kingdom, and for its enlargement; for our friends and enemies; and for the nation and its rulers. Father Albino and Mr. Neville acknowledged, that they were persuaded that all ostentatious additions made by men to this unornamented worship, were as unnecessary as lighting candles to assist the sun; and they blessed God for making them perceive the folly and wickedness of human inventions intended to make the religion of Jesus more perfect.

You will be glad to hear, Madam, that Mr. Neville has made our friend Thomas Livingstone his bailiff, and also that, as the housekeeper is on the point of marrying, Mrs. Livingstone will have the offer of the place, for which she is well qualified, as Thomas married her out of a gentleman's family. Mr. Neville told me, that as they were friends to his daughter, he was determined to be a friend to them. But, added he with tears, much more so because they are the friends of the Redeemer.

The mercy which God has shown to Miss Neville and her friends has had no small share in lessening her disorder, which was a good deal nervous. She is so well satisfied, she says, of the safe arrival of her sister in the heavenly Canaan, that her grief on account of her death is mixed with joy.

All my friends, when they know I am writing, desire their love to you. Mr. Neville and father Albino have spoken of you lately with great esteem. I can only add that I shall ever continue,

Dear Madam,

Your most affectionate niece,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

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LETTER LV.

From Mrs. Worthington to Mr. William Neville.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE company of Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell indisposed me for writing, or I should have acknowledged by the first post the receipt of your obliging letter. The great respect shown by your friends to my niece demands my best thanks; and I hope the high regard you have manifested for her, will be repaid by the tenderest affection, the most cheerful submission, and a prudent economy; and then you will have the less reason to regret that you did not marry a wife with a fortune equivalent to your own. I lately heard a gentleman say, that he could not afford to marry a wife with a fortune. For, said he, custom and education teach the ladies before marriage, to consider wealth as the one thing needful; and after marriage, when they are freed from the restraint of their parents, elegant houses, superb carriages, and an imitation of genteel people, are what the husband must indulge them in, or he must seek that happiness abroad which he will in vain seek for at home. If I thought my niece were not in disposition the very reverse of such young persons, I could not wish her to be the wife of Mr. William Neville.

Mr. Charles Clifford called yesterday morning to see me, or rather to inquire whether I had heard any thing more concerning our dear Eusebia. He was just come from Ireland when the news arrived of her shipwreck, and, being overcome with grief, he and his man immediately took horse, and visited all the towns upon the coast, both in England and France, hoping to hear something of her; but in vain. He then went to St. Omer's, where he found several persons who were acquainted with you, but could not gain any intelligence concerning your sister. He was there at the time the Bastile was destroyed, and would have visited Paris at that eventful period, if his grief for

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the loss of your sister had not swallowed up every other consideration.

Mr. Clifford has recommended himself to my esteem, both by his great affection for your sister, and by the unaffected piety that adorns his conversation. Yesterday in the afternoon at tea, after we had been discoursing of his being confuted by Eusebia, O Madam, cried he, it is not a desirable thing to be a deist or an atheist; such persons are of all men the most miserable.

True, Sir, replied I; and there is no important difference between deism and atheism, the god of the deist being an unknown god, which is no god at all. Had you no thoughts of religion, Sir, continued I, before your conversation with Miss Eusebia Neville and my niece?

Yes, Madam, answered he, I had. My mother, who was a pious woman, had endeavoured to store my infantile mind with divine knowledge, in consequence of which my conscience many times severely reproved me upon the commission of sin, and the neglect of prayer. Her death, which happened in my tenth year, was a great misfortune to me. When I came from school, I had no one to counsel me respecting religious duties, and I became more and more remiss, and at last totally regardless of them. At Oxford, however, providence so ordered it that I became acquainted with a very religious youth, by whose entreaty and example I was induced to enter upon a new course of life. I resolved to sin no more against God; to watch over my thoughts, words, and actions; and to be constant in my attendance upon divine worship, and in private prayer. Many, very many failures, exceedingly discouraged me. I again became remiss; after a while I consorted with those who had no religion; and at last was the foremost among those who derided it.

I doubt not, Sir, said I, but there were many steps before you entirely cast off the fear of God, and sat in the seat of the scornful.

So many, Madam, replied he, that time would fail me to relate one half of the gradations by which I arrived at athe-

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ism. Yet I am obliged to acknowledge, that in all the different stages I trusted in my own righteousness, and was as ignorant of the design of Christ's coming into the world as a savage of the desert. I first added Arianism to Arminianism, in consequence of my falling into the company of one of that persuasion. That the Messiah was a demi-god, or secondary Jehovah, did not shock my reason so much as his true and proper deity. I also found, that both the ancients and moderns, who maintained that doctrine, varied in their ideas concerning it.

So you gave up, Sir, said I, the scriptural doctrine of the deity of the Messiah, because the defenders of it are not perfectly agreed how the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, are the one Jehovah. But you might have considered, that notwithstanding the eternity of God is an indubitable truth, yet a comprehension of the nature of existence from eternity cannot be attained either by angels or by men. Many things are clearly revealed, for which we can assign either no reason at all, or at best, reasons that are unsatisfactory. Wherefore did not God prevent sin from entering into the new creation? And why did he bring Cain, Judas, and many others into existence, when he knew that it would be infinitely to their disadvantage? Yet shall we deny these certain things, because we cannot reconcile them with the goodness, mercy, and compassion of God, which are equally certain? Is it right to suppose, because our Creator has given us minds and abilities wonderfully capacious, that they are infinite? and yet they must be infinite, to comprehend him who is infinite. When God visited his creatures, it was to be expected that questions would be proposed by inquisitive mortals relative to so wonderful an affair, which an angel could not answer. But how long, Sir, did you continue in this rational religion?

I soon became acquainted, replied he, with several Socinian gentlemen, who undid all that my Arian friends had been doing. They endeavoured to prove, that Jesus was nothing more than a prophet commissioned by God to instruct mankind, and that he died a martyr to the truth of

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his doctrines. They either plausibly explained away the obvious meaning of the many passages of Scripture which opposed their hypothesis, or they at once rejected them as interpolations; and I as readily embraced a scheme, which lowered down to almost nothing a religion that I had the greatest reason to believe was not very favourable to me. After this I met with a gentleman who endeavoured to set aside the divinity of Christ in a summary way, namely, by attempting to prove that the far greatest part of the New Testament is spurious.

To have done his work effectually, interrupted I, he should have proved that the greatest part of the Old Testament is spurious likewise; since the deity of the Messiah is as much the subject of the prophetic writings, as of the apostolic. When you were making such progress, I doubt not but you soon arrived at the end of your journey.

Indeed, Madam, I did, answered Mr. Clifford: I presently fled from an accusing conscience, by giving up the whole as a volume contrived by priests for the purpose of keeping the ignorant multitude in awe, and of picking their pockets.

It has indeed, said I, been used to accomplish those purposes. A far nobler purpose, however, has been unremittingly pursued by its great Author. Not that its perversion has been without its use. Almost the whole of the book of Revelation is a prophetic description of the corruption of Christianity by its being made a state religion. This corruption of Christianity, therefore, is a proof of its truth, and such a proof as the first Christians could not possibly possess.—But, Sir, how did you go on after you had silenced the Old and New Testament?

Alas, Madam, cried he, I can testify to the truth of what is asserted in divine revelation, that there is no peace to the wicked. From that moment I would thankfully have changed condition with my dog or my horse. Every step to this state of unbelief and uncertainty was from bad to worse, till I plunged headlong into that gulf from which nothing but an almighty arm could extricate me.

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Did you never, said I, pray all this while?

I thought, replied he, that if I had attempted to pray, the earth would have opened, and swallowed me up. Yet, I remember that I stopped short once as I was walking, and, looking up to heaven, cried out, O God, if thou wilt save me, thou mayest; but I dare not ask it. I endeavoured by travelling and company to sooth my melancholy, and sometimes succeeded. I endeavoured to fortify myself in unbelief by the consideration, that a great part of the wise and learned, both at home and abroad, have long viewed it as a proposition already demonstrated, and needing no farther proof, that the Scriptures are calculated only for the meridian of the vulgar. I also looked upon Christians as far worse than Mahometans or pagans, and as answerable for all the blood which has been spilt on a religious account.

I think I know, Sir, said I, who confuted you when you advanced these sentiments.

Yes, Madam, replied he, it was one too good for this world, and who has therefore been called to the abodes of the blessed. That night is a night never to be forgotten. It was late when I reached home. Sitting down in the apartment of our steward, who is a pious man, I carelessly opened a book which lay there, and finding it to contain some sermons by Mr. Whitefield, determined to read a discourse upon Eccles. vii. 16, *Be not righteous overmuch*, &c. I said to myself, I am certain that I am righteous little enough; and I was so ignorant as to suppose that it was a dissuasive from over-strictness in religion. Upon reading it, I for the first time had a view of salvation by Jesus Christ; and an affecting view it was. It was too much for me to bear. I saw that every divine perfection centers in the Redeemer, and that he is the great atoning Sacrifice prefigured by all the sacrifices under the law. I was convinced that all my former attempts to please God were strange fire, idolatry, and self-dependence, and were not commanded in the oracles of truth. The glory that I saw in Christ left me no choice whether I would or would

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not trust in him. He appeared to me a precious Saviour, and the only physician of my soul. I prayed for the first time, in short and broken sentences, but with floods of tears; and my God heard, and delivered me out of the prison of Satan, out of the pit where there was no water, from the confines of hell. I bless God that he has hitherto preserved me from relapsing into my former infidelity, which of all evils I the most feared.

I rejoice with you, Sir, said I, that God has delivered you from that dreadful state. Having received much mercy, I hope you will be enabled to love much, and to manifest your gratitude by an obediential regard to the revealed will of God. You will remember the great price that was paid for your redemption, and the felicity which awaits the Christian in another world. What greater motives can be conceived than these to holiness of heart and life? The divine hand is visible in all you have related. You were at first convinced that you were a sinner, and you did not wish that God should be your enemy: you therefore attempted to serve him with a self-righteous, self-dependent obedience; but your devotion bore no resemblance to true religion. God, in great mercy, and in faithfulness to your soul, laid the reins on your neck, and suffered you first to embrace Arianism, then Socinianism, and at last Deism. The whole of this procedure was intended to humble you; to remove every incentive to boasting; and to induce you to exalt the sovereign mercy of God, in saving and calling you with a holy calling, not according to your works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given you in Christ Jesus before the world began.

I asked Mr. Clifford whether he had had any conversation with his father on this subject.

He answered in the affirmative. But you well know, Madam, said he, that my father has long been destitute of the very form of godliness. I notwithstanding besought him to consider, that very soon, according to the course of nature, he must exchange time for eternity; and I

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pointed out to him the blood of Christ as sufficient to cleanse the soul from sins of the deepest dye. It had however no effect. Every thing I said, whether concerning the joys of heaven, the torments of hell, the necessity of holiness, or the folly of a wicked life, were the objects of his derision. He said that I should soon be tired of my plaything, and should throw it away as other children do theirs.—Now I had known several instances of men who had made a very warm, not to say a very violent profession of religion, who yet after a while grew cool, went back into the world, and became more remiss than they had been before. I therefore retired into my closet, and implored my heavenly Father that he would never suffer me to leave him. I earnestly desired that he would rather deprive me of my life, since nothing less than lifting up my eyes in hell could be more dreadful to me than the thoughts of relapsing into my former infidelity.

The fears of Christians, replied I, are given them for their security, and are a fulfilment of the promise made by God concerning his children, *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* Other means of security have also been appointed. Christians ought not to pursue a solitary plan, and to have respect to no one's advantage but their own. On the contrary, being born of the same Spirit, and being children of the same family, and travellers to the same country, it is their duty to be united together in the fellowship of the gospel, to pray with and for each other, to hear the Scriptures read and explained, to remember the death of Christ by partaking of bread and wine in fellowship, and thus as a body to become the pillar and ground, or the support of the truth.

I acknowledge, Madam, answered he, that persons who are in the kingdom of Christ ought to conform to its laws: but to those who enter into a foreign country, time must be allowed for learning the laws of the country. I have conversed with several sincere friends of the Redeemer, who evidently appear to have the Spirit of Christ. One

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says to me, Mr. Clifford, as God has magnified his mercy in your conversion, I hope you will not leave the church of England, as too many in the same case do. God is evidently with us. A great number of gospel ministers have been sent to labour in this vineyard in the last fifty years; and if there are faults in the church, the dissenters are not perfect.—Another gentleman, who is a Baptist, said to me lately—as God appears to have given you a place among his children, it becomes you to prove your love to Christ by obeying his commandments, and to begin with putting on the Lord Jesus Christ by baptism. Examine, therefore, whether ye be not at present unbaptized.—Another gentleman, a Pædobaptist, after some religious conversation that I had with him yesterday said to me—you must come, Sir, among us. You will never be happy in the church of England, which in fact, is no other than a popish church in some measure reformed. The church of Rome is under the direction of the pope and cardinals. The church of England is under the direction of the king, lords, and commons; and the bishops, (who are put into that office by the king,) and the inferior clergy in convocation assembled, cannot alter one tittle of the creeds, articles, ceremonies, or prayers, without an act of parliament for that purpose. Although the great majority of the English clergy are Arminians, Arians, and Socinians, they subscribe articles which they do not pretend to believe; and many of them repeat every week prayers which in their opinion are blasphemous. They nevertheless cry up the excellence of the church, and are unwilling that a stone should be displaced or altered in this tottering fabric, lest the whole should fall into ruins: for they prudently consider that it keeps them warm and dry; and that if the cellars and pantries, which are the most commodious parts of the building, were to be rebuilt, they could not be made better than they are.—I replied to my friends who thus extolled their respective modes of religious worship, that I had infinite reason to be thankful that my eyes had been opened to behold the glory of God shining in the face of

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the Redeemer; but that I knew at present very little more of Christianity than this, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; and that I must walk with wary step, and read and pray over my Bible before I ventured to join myself to any society of Christians, because, notwithstanding there are good men in every society, yet Christians are too apt to overrate the comparative excellence of their own society, and to underrate that of others.

I commended Mr. Clifford for his intention of learning the whole of his religion from the Scriptures, and particularly recommended the New Testament.

But why, Madam, cried he, the New Testament rather than the Old? Do they not both teach the same doctrine, hold forth the same atonement, and contain the same truths in every respect, except that the one was the shadow, and the other the reality? Were not the sacrifices offered under the law the gospel preached to the Israelites? and was not Aaron in his royal and priestly vestments the type of our great High Priest?

All this, Sir, I grant, replied I; yet a bad use may be made of the best things. If, for instance, you were to ask the man of sin, arrayed in his royal and priestly robes, sitting upon his throne in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God, or exercising power which God has delegated to no one, what scriptural authority he has for this, he would immediately cite the example of Aaron, the Levitical high priest. Paul saw that the tendency of Judaizing in his day, was to make the cross of Christ of none effect; and yet at that early period, Judaizing Christians had made but little progress. When that bitter plant had grown to his height, the man of sin had grown to his height also. And you may depend upon it, that lordly domination, enthroned bishops, Aaronical vestments, the sacrifice of the mass, and altars resembling the altars under the law, will all fall together: yes, they will fall like a mill stone into the sea, never to rise any more, to the great grief of those spiritual merchants who have long trafficked in the souls of men.

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You have not mentioned tithes, Madam, said he.

Nor many other things, replied I. There being no command in the New Testament for the payment of tithes, when a proof of the divine right of tithes is required, they have recourse to the same authority as for the other fatal additions which have been made to Christianity.

Popery, Madam, said he, differs but little from paganism; and I thus account for it. When statesmen and bishops jointly undertook the work of conversion, and whole nations were at once to be made Christians, they found it necessary to consult the temper of the people, who had been accustomed to worship departed heroes, and to observe feats in commemoration of them, accompanied with divers sports and athletic exercises; so that it is a matter of doubt whether the pagans were converted to Christianity, or the Christians to paganism.

That Christianity has been exceedingly corrupted, replied I, is evident. To avoid the corruptions of it as much as possible, let us endeavour to follow the faith, the practice, and the exhortations of the apostles, so far as God shall enlighten our understanding. If this determination be accompanied with prayer, and with a mind open to conviction, our errors will not be very pernicious. In things which are doubtful we must decide for ourselves in the best manner we are able, leaving others to do the same, without any breach of charity. Some indeed would extend this charity to those who reject all the capital truths of the gospel, inferring from the doubtfulness of some things that nothing is certain. There are however, things certain, as well as things doubtful. It is certain, for instance, that the Messiah is the one Jehovah, and that beside him there is no God: but what it is which constitutes the specific difference between the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit, is a matter of doubtful disputation. For my own part, I consider each of those sacred persons as the one Jehovah; and in this my Bible abundantly confirms me. But when I attempt curiously to pry any further, I find many difficulties which I cannot solve. The same may be said con-

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cerning the prescience of God, his decrees, his permission of sin, and many other things. I do not perceive the impropriety of investigating these things with reverence and humility, provided we do not make our own conjectures, articles of faith, and anathematize our brethren for not seeing with our eyes.

I should think, Madam, said Mr. Clifford, we have no right to anathematize any persons, how wrong soever they may be; since to their own master they stand or fall.

True, Sir, answered I, we have not. But if God in his word pronounce an anathema against those who pervert the gospel, or who love not the Lord Jesus Christ, we ought to credit it: and where persons appear to us, upon serious reflection, to answer to these descriptions, we ought, on proper occasions, in love to their souls, to apprise them that they are in a state of imminent danger. This is not antichristian highchurch bigotry; it is not assuming a lordly domination over the faith of others; but it is charity, or love to the souls of men. It is endeavouring to save ourselves and those who hear us.

This, Sir, is the substance of our desultory conversation; and if there be any thing in it which will repay the trouble of reading it, I have my reward. It gave me pleasure; for next to my own salvation, nothing affords me greater satisfaction than to see a sinner rescued from everlasting destruction.

When you have leisure, I shall be glad to hear in what manner your conversion was effected. I am the more anxious to know this, because, by being sent into a popish country to complete your education, you were placed in a very unfavourable situation for becoming a protestant.

I must close this long letter with wishing you and my dear niece every blessing, if God in his providence should unite you. My best wishes attend your valuable father, Signior Albino, Miss Neville, and Thomas Livingstone, and his wife.

Believe me to be, Dear Sir,
Your sincere friend,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

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LETTER LVI.

From Mr. William Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I RECEIVED your obliging letter, and rejoice to hear that God has delivered Mr. Charles Clifford out of the dreadful state which he described to you. We all feel ourselves exceedingly obliged to him for the concern he has shown for our dear Eusebia. I showed my father your letter, and he determined to wait upon him, that he might hear him relate where he had been to inquire after my sister, and that he might tell him how much we all considered ourselves obliged to him.

Yesterday morning I accompanied my father to Poplar Grange, where we found the elder Mr. Clifford, Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell, and Mr. Law the rector of Barnwell; but unhappily Mr. Charles Clifford was not at home. The old gentleman insisted upon our dining with him; and we the more readily complied, that we might hear what Mr. Barnwell would say about my dear Miranda. He was silent about her till Mrs. Barnwell said after dinner to my father, I suppose, Sir, Miss Barnwell intends to come home no more. She may think that we shall entreat her to return, but she is much mistaken: she is very undutiful, I assure you. As she was an only child, Mr. Barnwell has humoured her till he has spoiled her; and I tell him he must take it for his pains.

Truly, Sir, said Mr. Barnwell, I once thought her equal to any one, both in person and mind; but the girl is become a fool. I have been informed that she lodges at old Livingstone's the hedger, and I have since heard that she is sometimes at your house. My sister Worthington told me that she was about to be married; but I did not ask to whom, as I suppose it was to some beggar like herself.

Here Mr. Law took upon himself to help Mr. Barnwell

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out, by saying that Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell were undoubtedly justly offended with her for keeping company with low people, the scum of the earth, and for not submitting to that authority which God and nature gave a parent over his children.

Had I given way to my feelings, I should have said something very severe to the rector. But I thank God that I maintained a proper government of my temper; for persons, when they are angry, seldom do or say any thing of which they have not afterward cause to repent.

My father said in reply to Mr. Law, that he had been acquainted with Miss Barnwell from her infancy, and that, except the common foibles of childhood and youth, he had not observed any thing in her conduct or manners which did not recommend her to his esteem. With regard to you, Mr. Barnwell, said he, I fear there is something blameable in your conduct to your daughter. This suspicion flows from your own confession; for I assure you Miss Barnwell has never mentioned you to me, but with the respect due to a parent. You have intimated pretty plainly that you have no concern for her welfare; or rather you have demonstrated it, by affirming that you have no desire to know any thing about the person who wishes to make her his wife. If he should be a person in low circumstances, you seem to suppose that she will have sunk into the depth of misery. But why should you think so? If her husband be an honest, industrious, and religious man, he may render her happy, and be a suitable husband for her, if you are determined to disown her as you seem to be. Provided he be a man of that description, if you will do nothing for them, I will give them something to begin the world with.

Sir, you are very kind, replied Mr. Barnwell, and I know, mean the best. At the same time I cannot think it quite right that children should be encouraged to be disobedient to their parents. She knew that she would be welcome to my house, if she came with a determination to

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be obedient. A child of mine shall not cast off my authority, while under my roof.

Pray, Sir, said my father, what is her specific crime? It is possible I may be a mediator between you. I have only heard in general terms from Mr. Law that she keeps company with the scum of the earth. If that be the case, undoubtedly, Sir, you have great reason to be dissatisfied; and I myself shall think her a very improper companion for my children, lest they should be corrupted by her evil example.

I am afraid, Sir, you misunderstand me, replied Mr. Law; by the scum of the earth I did not mean wicked persons, but persons in mean circumstances.

According to this definition, Sir, said my father, the same opprobrious appellation might be given to Christ and his apostles; for they were persons in mean circumstances. The same also might be said of Socrates, of Epictetus, and of the wise and virtuous Cincinnatus, who was called from the plough to be a Roman Dictator. I am amazed, Sir, that you who are a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus, should call the virtuous poor the scum of the earth.

Mr. Law, Sir, answered Mr. Barnwell, only intended to show the impropriety of my daughter's keeping company with persons so much below her.

True Sir, said Mr. Law; and I maintain that she not only acts imprudently in so doing, but that to imprudence she adds disobedience to her parent, who insisted upon her promising that she would not go among that kind of people any more.

Is going among poor people, Sir, replied my father, a crime of so black a dye? This surely you cannot mean to insinuate. The crime, if there be any, must lie in the occasion of her going to see them. Was it to do them good or to injure them?

Sir, cried Mr. Clifford, I believe I must unravel this affair, since I perceive my friends cannot persuade themselves to tell you the plain truth. The case is this. Miss

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Barnwell was left at Islington with her aunt, who is a dissenter, while her father went to Jamaica, and she cannot be satisfied now unless she is permitted to go to the meeting. And ought we to wonder at it? I tell my friend Barnwell that he is certainly in the fault; for if it is a crime to go to a dissenting meeting-house, why did he leave her with a dissenter? For my part, however, I see no evil in it: for though they are in general poor people who attend the meeting in country villages, yet they are the sober and industrious poor. I do not mean to reflect upon Mr. Law: but if you examine the character of the poor people throughout the kingdom, and find a poacher, a hedge-breaker, a hen-roost robber, or one that goes to no place of worship above three or four times in a year, you may almost take it for granted that he is a churchman. I believe none of you will accuse me of being prejudiced in favour of any religious sect; yet I cannot help perceiving that the poor among the dissenters, in general, are persons of understanding, decent, industrious, civil, sober, and valuable members of society. If dissenting teachers, without the aid of government, have the art of civilizing a considerable part of the labouring poor, I think the whole nation is obliged to them.

I have no dislike to dissenters, said Mr. Barnwell. I would have every person go to that place to which he has been accustomed: but my pride will not suffer me to permit my daughter to associate with such low people.

It seems, Sir, replied my father, I have at last discovered your daughter's unpardonable fault. Being influenced by the just fear of him who made her, and knowing that she as well as you and I must soon stand before his judgment-seat, she wished to act agreeably to her conscience, and to spend her sabbaths where she at least thought she heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. Indeed, friend Barnwell, you have acted not merely improperly, but with great inhumanity. Your child asked for nothing but what the laws of God, of reason, and of her country allowed, and you yourself also would have allowed, as you acknow-

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ledge, only on account of your pride. I have heard of the wicked, in his pride, persecuting the poor, and of people being deceived by the pride of their heart: but I never heard that pride made a person wise. In reality there is not a man upon earth whose folly is not equal to his pride. Discard, therefore, this troublesome inmate, and be persuaded to think that you will be wise and happy in proportion as you are humble.

Is there no such thing then, Sir, cried Mrs. Barnwell, as a virtuous pride?

I have heard of such a thing, replied my father, but I scarcely know what it is. Pray, Madam, how would you define it?

Why, Sir, replied she, hesitating, a virtuous pride is—is—a virtuous pride.

Mrs. Barnwell means, Sir, said Mr. Law, that there is a propriety to be observed in all our actions, and that every person ought to keep up his dignity by associating with none but those of his own rank. Miss Barnwell was not only born in one of the higher orders of the community, but has had a genteel education, and is a lady of good natural sense, and of considerable reading. It is truly astonishing that she could so far underrate her own judgment, as to suppose she could learn any thing from a fellow, who, a few years past, was only a shoemaker. It is undoubtedly a species of insanity, that persons, at least of her rank and education, should leave their parish church, to hear an undigested harangue, delivered by a fellow, who, I should suppose, does not understand the common rules of grammar. Are not gentlemen of a liberal education, intended for the ministry, and regularly ordained, better qualified to teach Christianity than an ignorant mechanic?

With Mr. Neville's leave, said Mr. Clifford, I will answer this question. My father assenting, he thus began: If, Sir, I had a son whom I wanted to be taught the languages, mathematics, logic, metaphysics, &c. I certainly should send him to you rather than to the shoemaker:

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but if I sincerely wished him to be made a Christian, I should prefer the cobbler to you. I have had a liberal education myself: yet who that knows me would think of sending their children to me to be taught Christianity? They perhaps might prefer your teaching, Sir, to mine. The reason is, I am too honest for this world. I don't profess to be any thing but what I am. I have not that worldly wisdom, that necessary prudence, which many have, and so I am termed an infidel. I accept the appellation. I put on the cap, because I know it fits me. Yet, Sir, if any man were to dare to tell me that I am not as good a Christian as you, or as nine tenths of those who are brought up to the art and mystery of preaching, I should be highly offended. If you ask why I think thus? I answer, that any fool may know what is told him. You all tell me that you don't believe the Scriptures, or nine tenths of you at least, as I said before. You tell this to me, and to all the world, by your actions, which are better proofs than words. If you believed a heaven or a hell, would you dare solemnly to subscribe articles which you do not believe, or pretend to give your unfeigned assent and consent to them for the lucre of a paltry living? I could not myself do it, infidel as I am; and if I had done it, I would throw up my preferments, and restore my ill-gotten goods, as many worthy men have done. To subscribe one set of doctrines, and to preach another, is the greatest prevarication. The clergy indeed tell us that the sin lies with them who require subscription. But I do not think so; for if you take the wages, you ought to do the work your masters set you about. The conscience of those surely is not very scrupulous, who for the sake of gain declare their belief of things which they do not believe, and then try to fasten the guilt upon those who hold out the temptation. Call the articles which you are obliged to subscribe, articles of peace, or by whatever name you choose, falsehood is falsehood still, and will be so to the end of the world, however it may be gilded and adorned to silence the clamours of conscience. Besides, my friend, your religion and the re-

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ligion of Jesus are two different religions. Only endeavour to convert a Jew to Arianism or Socinianism, and he will tell you as I do, that you are no Christian.

Observe I do not blame you for disbelieving the articles; but I blame you for declaring that you believe them when you do not, and for exclaiming against the poor shoemaker, who I doubt not does believe them. I have long considered Christianity as a fortress built for the protection of tyranny; the dignified and benificed clergy are its officers, the poor curates are the common soldiers. Hence proceeded that wise proverb, No bishop, no king; that is, no tyrant: for a good and patriotic king stands in need of no such aid.

Come, come, Mr. Clifford, cried my father, you are too severe upon the clergy.

O no, Sir, replied he, Mr. Law knows I cannot help speaking the truth, and he has long ceased to be offended at any thing I say. It is reasonable that it should be so; for he knows that he is at full liberty to say any thing to me, provided he speak the truth.

Mr. William Neville, said Mr. Clifford, you look very serious. If that dear girl had been here, whose loss I assure you has grieved me very much, and affected my son beyond any thing you can conceive, I say if she and her friend Miss Barnwell had been here, Mr. Law would not have come off so easily. But he and I have boxed one another so often, that we don't feel each other's blows.

I am truly sorry, Sir, answered I, that a person of your sense and education should avow your disbelief and dislike of Christianity. You say that it has been used as a fortress for the protection of tyranny. I grant that it has been perverted by being made a state religion: but which of the mercies of God has not been abused? It is not in its own nature calculated to be an established religion; for it never can become so, except it be first exceedingly corrupted.

Pray, Sir, said Mr. Law, how do you prove that? Though I do not care to dispute with Mr. Clifford, because

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I know he will have his own way, I cannot hear such an assertion from you, and be silent. Is not Christianity the established religion in every catholic country in Europe? Why then is it not fit to be the established religion in protestant countries.

It is unfit, Sir, replied I, for that purpose, in any country; since the church or kingdom of Christ is neither of this world, nor governed by worldly maxims. Christ is the only head and lawgiver of his own kingdom, and his subjects are all brethren. Neither wealth, learning, nor genius, can exalt any one of his subjects above the rest. The bishops whom they choose from among themselves to preside over them, are neither directors of their faith nor of their practice: they can only inform them what Christ and his apostles have commanded, and enforce those commands by the penalties mentioned in Scripture, which do not extend either to life or limb, to fine or imprisonment. The forms of proceeding in a bishop's court against a delinquent would be in vain sought for in the New Testament. I might make the same observation concerning the election of bishops by virtue of a congé d'elire, or royal mandate; concerning the consecrating and enthroning of them when chosen; and concerning their being lords of parliament, or indeed lords in any sense. They who have learned this kind of Christianity from the precepts of Jesus, or of his humble followers, must have read the New Testament to little purpose. Religion is now said to wear golden slippers; but it is a very different religion from that of Jesus Christ, whose followers have by the noble and wise men of this world been always esteemed the offscouring of all things, or, as Mr. Law terms them, the scum of the earth. This is the hour and the power of darkness. Christians must wait a little while, and every thing will be in their favour; their enemies will then be ashes under the soles of their feet. With regard to you, Mr. Barnwell, permit me to tell you, that in persecuting your daughter you are wounding yourself to death. She is a daughter of whom you are unworthy. While you are despising her, treating

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her as an enemy and alien, and rendering her an orphan, she is praying for your happiness, and weeping over that distress, that misery and destruction, which she too well knows are coming upon you.

Sir, replied Mr. Barnwell contemptuously, you are a young man. When you have lived as many years as your father or I, you will know better. You will by that time I doubt not have learned, that God and nature have made you the rightful guardian of your children, and that their conduct ought to be under your direction, at least while they are under your care. We will soon settle this point, continued he. Pray, Sir, answer me this plain question. Does not an apostle command children to obey their parents? But faith, faith, faith, among enthusiasts now-a-days, is every thing, and morality is nothing at all.

Well done, exclaimed Mr. Law, smiling; I dare say you have given this young gentleman a knot that he may cut, but that he will not be able to untie.

Pray, Sir, said I, when will you acknowledge it to be untied?

When you have proved, Sir, said he, that children are not to be obedient to their parents.

I suppose, said I, that you confine obedience to parents to their lawful commands.

Undoubtedly, answered Mr. Law.

Suppose, Sir, said I, Mr Barnwell and his daughter had lived in the time of the apostles, and had heard Paul preach at Philippi when Lydia was converted. Suppose further the word of God had made the same impression upon Miss Barnwell's mind, which it did upon the mind of that excellent woman, would it have been lawful for her after this to obey her father by joining in the worship of Jupiter or Apollo?

It would not, answered he; but the case is not similar. Miss Barnwell was commanded to attend the worship of God in a Christian church.

I will not take the advantage, Sir, replied I, of showing the unlawfulness of forcing the conscience in any case

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whatever. It is sufficient for me to deny that she was commanded to attend the worship of God in a Christian church. If you cannot prove that she was so commanded, it will follow from your own concession that Mr. Barnwell commanded his daughter to do that which was unlawful. It will also follow that it was not her duty to obey him, for filial obedience is restricted in the New Testament to lawful things. *Children*, says the apostle, *obey your parents in the Lord:* and our Lord predicted that parents and children would become the most bitter enemies to each other on account of the gospel.

Am I put upon proving, said Mr. Law, that the church to which Miss Barnwell was commanded to go, is a Christian church? It would be a difficult thing to prove that the sun shines, to a man who shuts his eyes. I am willing to allow the church of Rome to be a true church, and I think myself entitled to equal candour from you. But I am doubtful, Sir, whether you are a catholic; for you talk very strangely for one of that communion.

It is sufficient, Sir, answered I, to inform you, that I am a member of no national church, and that I consider the numerous corruptions which have been introduced into Christianity as one great cause of the infidelity of the great, both in catholic and protestant countries; since, in opposing and deriding priestcraft, they unwisely imagine they are opposing and deriding Christianity. A Christian church, continued I, is an assembly of faithful men, meeting together in one place to hear their pastor or bishop explain and enforce the writings of the apostles and prophets. This bishop is a person of their own choice, possessing the qualifications which are enumerated in Paul's first epistle to Timothy. The things taught at the universities to youth designed for the ministry are no part of those qualifications: it is no marvel therefore that reading a moral essay should by such teachers be mistaken for preaching the gospel. A composition that would have been heard with pleasure by a Roman audience in the time of paganism, must be essentially different from that divine

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morality which has its foundation in the love of God, manifested in the gift of his Son to die for sinners, and which is powerfully and properly enforced from that consideration. Mr. Barnwell's insinuation that the doctrine embraced by the despised servants of Jesus consists of nothing but faith, is a libel on Christianity. They who hold the doctrine of justification by faith alone, maintain with the apostles, that wherever the truth of the gospel is received, it will be productive of love to God, and of universal submission to his will; and that where this is not in a considerable degree the case, there is no real Christianity.

I tell you what, my friend, said Mr. Clifford, (looking at Mr. Law,) I would advise you to give it up. I don't mean the argument; that you have lost; but the profession of Christianity. Have not I always told you that you believe no more of it than I? And has not my young friend demonstrated it? What a vile imposition has priestcraft been in every age of the world! I don't mean in the least to reflect upon my friend Law; he does but as others do: but that consideration would not satisfy my conscience, though I am an infidel.

Mr. Clifford, replied Mr. Law, I have long determined to enter into no dispute with you, as I can neither impart any good to you, nor receive any good from you; and Mr. William Neville I see has formed his opinion; we must therefore agree to differ. If I am but as good as many gentlemen who have been members of the church of England, I need not wish to be any better.

For my part, said Mr. Barnwell, I would rather have been employed in shooting butterflies. Talking about religion is to me the most unprofitable, insipid, unintelligible thing in the world. Besides, if we talk for ever, can we be any thing more than honest? I beg, young gentleman, you will answer me that one question, by saying Yes or No.

I reply then, Sir, said I, by answering, No.

There then, cried he, you see what it all comes to when you can bring people to the point.

Ah, my friend, said Mr. Clifford, be assured you are no

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nearer than you were before. Mr. William Neville may tell you that you have not behaved very honestly to your daughter, nor done to her as you would be done by. I *pretend* to no religion, and you *have* no religion; therefore being both upon a footing, I should imagine we should be induced to act alike. She is as fine a girl as any parent can boast of, and a sensible good girl. I have heard how you have used her: it came from one of your servants, and I blushed for you. Before I could have used my Charles so for one hour, I could have plucked my heart out with my own hands. You perceive how our friend Neville and his son compassionate her case, though they are not related to her. If she marry an honest man, (and if he be a man of their approving I have no doubt but he will be so,) I will add five hundred pounds to what Mr. Neville does for her, whether you give her any thing or not.

Here, Madam, I rose hastily, and went out; for I found myself so exceedingly moved, that like Joseph I was obliged to go and weep in secret. Those words occurred to my mind, *And the earth helped the woman*; by which I think we are taught, that when the church is oppressed by wicked Christians, or by the man of sin, God will raise it up friends from among men of the world, who make no profession of Christianity.

I learned from my father that all that Mr. Clifford and himself could say respecting my dear Miranda, made no impression on her cruel parent. The sum of what he replied was, that he hated all pretenders to religion; that she was welcome to come home, and behave as she used to do; but that her refusing Mr. Clifford, on a religious account, was what he never could forgive.

As Mr. Charles Clifford did not return home while we were there, his father promised that he should call on us the next day. I expect him every minute. My father invited all the company to dine with us this day fortnight, which will be your niece's birthday. If any thing should occur worth relating, my good Mrs. Worthington will hear from me. My dear girl, and all our family, know of my

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writing, and unite in the most sincere respects. The first moment I have any leisure, I will do what you desire: it will recall to my remembrance some very bitter, and some very happy moments.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours very affectionately,
WILLIAM NEVILLE.

LETTER LVII.

From Mr. Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I OUGHT not any longer to omit informing Mrs. Worthington, under my own hand, how much I consider both my family and myself indebted to her. What a treasure have I lost—and lost through my own guilty ignorance! I repeat it, through my guilty ignorance; for having the oracles of truth in my hand, I ought to have consulted them, and to have yielded an implicit obedience to those infallible directors. I bless God, I now endeavour to do so with my whole heart, so far as I know that which is justly said to be deceitful above all things. What would I not be willing to do or to suffer, if I could but live the time over again in which I persecuted my dear child. Let superstitious bigots and persecutors take warning by me. Let them hear my unhappy tale, and tremble, lest like me they make bitter work for repentance when it shall be too late. Paul bewailed all his lifetime his having persecuted the friends of the Redeemer: but he did not persecute a dutiful child. I can compare myself to none but Jephthah, whose superstition occasioned the death of his beloved daughter. But alas! he did not consider his child as God's enemy. She too was willing to fall a victim to her father's rash vow. But the mercy of God is equal to my crime. That mercy manifested in Christ Jesus has been my only refuge. Oceans of water would not have cleansed me; nitre and

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much soap would not have purified me. O that my repentance did but equal that of M. de Barreaux. He seems to have had the deepest sense of his vileness, and a glorious view of the mercy of God manifested in Jesus Christ. This is my own case. I had fainted under the sense of my guilt, unless I had seen the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Henceforth may I determine to know nothing, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

My dear friend, cannot you make it convenient to pay us a visit? If you will make such an addition to the favours I and mine have already received, either my daughter or your niece shall go to London and accompany you down. I do not mention the time of your stay, since, if we could render it agreeable to yourself, I should wish it to be as long as you have any thing to do with time, being sensible that Mrs. Worthington will be a blessing to any family wherein she resides.

I account it no small mercy that my son has been directed by Providence to the choice of a woman for a wife who I believe sincerely loves him, and, which is of greater importance, who loves God. Your niece meets with every kind of respect in my family. I love her for her own, as well as for my son's sake; and my daughter esteems her as much as if she were her sister. I used formerly to think she had too much vivacity. But the brutal treatment she has received from her parent has pruned every exuberance of that kind; or it is possible the just sense she now entertains of eternal things has given her that becoming gravity, which is an ornament to persons of every age, and in every station.

When I was in the church of Rome, I misunderstood the nature and design of Christianity. I now see that the wound made by sin is an alienation of mind from God, or in other words a hatred of him. In vain might I have fasted till I had been a skeleton, and in vain have given all my goods to feed the poor; for mere self-love was the principal motive that influenced my actions: at best, what good I did proceeded from tender feelings, and

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natural sympathy. I did not perceive that the death of Christ was intended to show us the infinite evil of sin, the infinite love of God to a perishing world, and the impossibility of purchasing or meriting the divine favour, and by all these considerations to reconcile us to God. I have been obliged to unlearn almost every thing which I had learned while I was in that communion.

In my dear Eusebia's closet I met with archbishop Leighton's works, which I found by the correspondence between her and her friends were your valuable gift. I have read the four volumes with unspeakable pleasure and profit. The writings of that great man breathe the same spirit with the gospels and epistles, and also with the religion of Abraham and the patriarchs, and of David and the prophets. How different is that spirit from the heathen divinity which we find in the Greek and Roman writers. Almost every page carries in it a demonstration of its own truth, and of the truth of that divine revelation which dwelt in him in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. I feel the truth of what he says. I have that in myself which answers to it as face answers to face in a mirror. In vain would it be to try for days and months and years to make a man born blind comprehend the nature of light and colours; but if his eyes be opened, he will immediately understand it. Much has been said concerning the time when the epistles and gospels were written, both by those who have maintained, and by those who have denied the authenticity of those writings; and many are the arguments which have been offered to prove their divine origin. But if I may judge of others by myself, all these things are like music to the deaf, or paintings to the blind, if the same Spirit be not received who dictated them. I have been a blind man, having eyes, and a deaf man, having ears. I say not this to excuse myself: my blindness was a moral, a guilty, and not an innocent blindness.

The letters which passed between you, Madam, your niece, and my daughter, were blessed to me by the Spirit

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of God. They convinced me first of all, that till that time my hopes of eternal life had been founded upon my own excellence, although I deserved everlasting destruction. At the same time I saw a door opened into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus, capacious enough to admit the chief of sinners. The next thing of which I was convinced was, that Christ's kingdom is not of this world. All my popery was hereby slain. I read that divine prophecy, the revelation of John, with new eyes. I could not doubt who was denoted by the woman riding upon a scarlet-coloured beast, and drunken with the blood of the saints; nor who are the daughters of this mother of harlots. What church, said I, is that which has committed fornication with the kings of the earth? Who are so likely to strip her of her possessions as those who first endowed her with them? And who will bewail her fall, except those spiritual merchants who are represented as trading in the souls of men? I clearly discerned that the leading subject of that book is the rise and fall of an antichristian society, which should be permitted for a limited time to persecute the faithful followers of Jesus. These are represented as a woman preserved by the power of God in the wilderness from the devil, who pursues her with all the malice and venom of a dragon, and endeavours to destroy her and her seed by a flood of persecutions.

My son wishes to be made happy in his dear Miranda. To this I have no other objection than the recent death of a sister for whom he had the most tender affection, and whom in disposition, as well as in person, he very much resembles. She had a gentle behaviour, a winning softness, a gravity without moroseness, and a modesty without excessive timidity. How should I enlarge, if I were to describe the beauties of her person and of her mind! but I must forbear; the remembrance is too distressing. I must endeavour to console myself with the consideration, that she has passed the swellings of Jordan, and has mingled with kindred spirits to be for ever with the Lord.

God only knows how long I may continue in this vale of tears. I am exceedingly oppressed with lowness of spir-

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its; I sigh frequently, sleep little, feel myself sinking, notwithstanding I have a good appetite, and am terrified as it were by my own shadow. A sudden rapping at the door, the receipt of a letter, or almost any trifling thing, makes me tremble and feel unhappy. The mercy of God manifested in Christ, and his promises to guilty sinners who lie under the shadow of his wings, are almost my only consolation: and that is sometimes impeded by my dreading, lest after all I should be like those hearers who received the seed into stony places or among thorns.

You will be glad to hear, Madam, that Signior Albino, whom you have often seen at Mr. Barnwell's, is the reverse of what he was. He is I trust a sincere Christian. What a change in my family! The death of my daughter has through the divine mercy been a blessing to us all, as I doubt not it has been to herself also.

Mr. Charles Clifford has just been here. What a difference has divine grace made between him and his father! He is in mourning for my child, for whom he had the most sincere affection. He gave me an account of all the places at which he had inquired after her. He heard nothing of her. I feel for him almost the affection of a parent, and have entreated him to let us have as much of his company as he can. His father, with Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell, and Mr. and Mrs. Law, are to dine with me this day fortnight, and he promises to accompany them. It will be your niece's birthday: I do not know what may then take place. I am, with the sincerest esteem,

Dear Madam, your friend, and
Most obedient servant,
JAMES NEVILLE.

LETTER LVIII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Mr. Neville.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your obliging letter, and rejoice with you that in great mercy you are brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

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I pray for you that you may not be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Your daughter had very few equals in any respect: it is no wonder therefore, you regret the loss of her. But remember that Christianity was her chief excellence. It was that which ennobled her nature, and raised it to immortality. The dissolution, therefore, of her mortal frame, has ushered her into the presence of her Lord, where she is now like him, and beholds him without a cloud between.

You undoubtedly were her persecutor, though you meant not so to be. And where can an unregenerate person be found that is a friend to the children of God as such? Your being an enemy therefore to your own dutiful child, did not prove you to be a greater sinner than unregenerate men in common are. A gracious God has made you a monument of his mercy, in order that you may be sensible of his goodness both in time and eternity. And do you think she does not view herself as a monument of mercy likewise? Yes, Sir, all the redeemed so consider themselves on one account or another.

That you have so just a view of the Revelation much pleases me. The accomplishment of the prophecies in the rise of antichrist, who like Babylon of old has been a thorn in the sides of the people of God, has abundantly proved the truth of Christianity; and his fall, which has already commenced, is a proof of the same truth, which proof, like Ezekiel's river, is growing broader and deeper every day.

I am sorry to hear that you are so ill. The disorder which you have described is a frequent appendant to riches, and makes the lord of ten thousand acres more miserable than the poorest of his vassals. Nervous complaints are not generally the portion of the poor. If the rich would be free from this dreadful malady, they must become poor, either in reality or artificially. The person whose labour or exercise does not bear a pretty exact proportion to his food, will be a valetudinarian in some form or other: and although a good constitution may put off the evil day, yet it

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must come; and nothing hastens its approach so much as trouble. Trouble affects the nerves of the stomach, and brings on indigestion, accompanied with sinking, lowness of spirits, and mental horrors more dreadful than all the rest. To many persons thus afflicted it would be a mercy to be stripped of their substance, in order that that moderation and labour might ensue which their present opulence prevents. The great art of preserving health consists in proportioning the food to the power of digestion. If this be not attended to, the stone, the dropsy, the jaundice, or a complication of disorders will succeed; and very frequently a train of nervous symptoms, which have long been the opprobrium of medicine.

One considerable bar in the way of the cure of persons afflicted with nervous diseases is, that in general they think themselves the most abstemious people living. Now with what decency can they be exhorted to abridge themselves of half their habitual food, who think they eat too little already?

Cornaro, the noble Venetian, the account of whom you possibly may not have seen, had, by his excesses, brought himself to the borders of the grave before he was forty years of age. He then formed a resolution to be temperate. He began with confining himself to twelve ounces of solid food, and a pint of wine, in twenty-four hours. Thus he continued to live for a great number of years: but he was obliged, many years before his death, gradually to lessen the quantity, until he found the yolk of an egg sufficient for a day. During all this time he enjoyed perfect health, together with a fine flow of spirits, which continued to the last hour, and almost to the last minute of his life. At upwards of a hundred he laid his head back in his chair, and expired without a groan, and apparently without pain.

After he had entered upon this temperate course, an estate was unjustly wrested from him and his relations. This broke the heart of some of them, while he was very little affected by it.

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Many of the servants of God who have not feared to be dead, have dreaded dying, and that not without reason, since the generality of mankind die a violent death. A reasonable expectation of leaving this world by slow degrees, without pain or sickness, and with a serene resignation to the divine will, is worth all that self-denial which temperance demands.

There are thousands of persons who are considered by themselves and others as very temperate, who yet eat more than they can digest. Let me therefore entreat you, Sir, to diminish the quantity of your food a little, and, if you find yourself better, then to diminish it a little more, till you find by experience that you eat no more than nature requires.

Too great variety of food at one meal is in this respect very injurious. After a person has eaten to loathing, a new dish will procure him a fresh appetite, and every additional dish will be an additional incentive to gluttony.

Different constitutions require different kinds of food. You must find out by experience what best agrees with your own. I cannot but think that too great a proportion of animal food is eaten in this kingdom; and also that there are many persons who ought not to eat any solid animal food, and who, if they were to live entirely on soups and a vegetable diet, would gain that health which they in vain seek for from medicine.

Permit me to add a word or two more.—Use a great deal of exercise in the open air. Let your suppers be very early, and very light. After evening family worship let Miss Neville or my niece play a psalm tune for a quarter of an hour on your organ, and let the rest of the family accompany it with their voices, singing a psalm or hymn, from Dr. Watt's Psalms and Hymns, or from Dr. Rippon's Selection, each person having a book. And to conclude, retire to rest early, and rise early.

I cannot but think that a compliance with these directions, accompanied with that serenity of mind which flows from a sense of the pardon of sin, from communion with

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God, and from a good conscience, would greatly alleviate, if not entirely remove your disorder.

I rejoice to hear of the change in Signior Albino. How rough and unpolished by nature are the stones which God uses in building his spiritual temple. Bears and lions change their natures, agreeably to the beautiful description by Isaiah, and become proper companions for the laborious ox and the harmless sheep.

I thank you, Sir, for your kind invitation to Thorton Abbey. I hope some time to have the pleasure of seeing a family in whose happiness I am so much interested, but cannot make it convenient to myself at present.

I also thank you and your family for the very great kindness shown to my niece. You think she had formerly too much vivacity. You kindly give it the best name it would bear: you might more properly have called it pertness. Poor girl! her mother died when she was young; and it is not every father that knows how to educate his children as he ought. Justice obliges me to say in her behalf, that she had a pliant temper, and might have been bent to almost any thing. But where parents cherish their children's defects, and mistake pertness for wit, which was Mr. Barnwell's case, it is no wonder that children behave improperly. I hope a sense of redeeming love has seasoned her mind with becoming gravity, and has made her a possessor of that cheerfulness and serenity which is not allied to noisy mirth, and of that wisdom which does not consist in pert loquacity, and in being ever on the watch to say smart things, but in constantly endeavouring to glorify God, and to benefit ourselves and others, by our words and actions. Whenever I perceived her culpable, I reproved her freely, and she readily acknowledged her fault.

Whatever may take place at the time mentioned in the close of your letter, I earnestly pray that it may be attended with the divine blessing.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very respectfully,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

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LETTER LIX.

From Mrs. Worthington to Miss Barnwell.

MY DEAR NIECE,

IN a letter I have received from Mr. Neville, he has hinted that something may possibly take place on your birthday: I think he means your intended marriage. He has also invited me to Thornton Abbey. I have promised, with the divine permission, at some convenient opportunity to accept the invitation; but I have added that I cannot do so at present. If my conjecture is well founded, and you and my other friends choose to come to town, and can be contented with my accommodations, I need not tell you how happy I shall be in the company of those I so highly esteem.

It becomes you, my dear niece, to admire and adore the providence of God that has watched over you for good! You have reason to adopt the words of the psalmist, *When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.* As you have received much mercy, it may be justly expected that you should love much; that God should be in all your thoughts; and that you should endeavour to glorify him in every thought, word, and action. Very great esteem and gratitude will also be due to him, who will have taken you from the low and deserted state wherein he found you. Common affection and esteem will not be accounted sufficient, either by God or man, as a return for great and uncommon favours. It will become you also to reflect, that the higher you are exalted above what you had reason to expect, so much the greater hazard you will run of losing the affection of him who has thus favoured you. I doubt not but you now make it your study to give Mr. Neville not the shadow of a reason to complain of you. In so doing you act rightly; but marriage, instead of lessening the necessity of this prudent caution, will increase it; since time considerably cools that ardent affec-

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tion which makes lovers blind to each other's imperfections. If the wife be chaste, humble, submissive, patient, industrious, frugal, and kind and obliging to her husband's relatives and friends, as well as to himself, although ardent affection may decrease, esteem will be augmented, which is a passion far more durable than what is termed love; since if the latter be not supported by qualities intrinsically valuable, it will, like a fiery meteor, produce a blaze, and then be extinguished for ever.

Married persons should endeavour to practise whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, and whatsoever things are of good report; the best preparative and security for which are the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and an habitual desire to please him. Need we wonder that persons destitute of the love and fear of God, and educated in a course of luxury, idleness, and dissipation, and in a continual round of sensual gratifications, should after marriage cool in their affection, and first slight and afterwards hate each other? If they possess a degreee of prudence sufficient to prevent elopement, adultery, and divorce, yet how many instances are there where they are continually wrangling, striving for mastery, and crossing and contradicting each other. Such wretched beings resemble infernal spirits, whose temper and disposition are the reverse of that love, joy, and peace, which constitute the happiness of the blessed. Even provided the husband or the wife have so much good sense as to give up every thing, and submit to every thing, rather than live in continual warfare, this is a state neither to be envied nor desired. But I believe there are few unhappy marriages in which the parties stop at this miserable mediocrity. The husband frequently, soon after marriage, turns his thoughts upon forbidden objects, spends his time and his substance at a tavern or a brothel, and finding no comfort at home, where indeed he has no just right to expect any, becomes a furious tyrant, and treats her whom he took to love, to defend, and to protect, with brutal fero-

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city, till disease, beggary, and death, end the dreadful scene. Frequently also the wife, determined to have her will in every thing, begins from the day of marriage to put her design in execution, by suffering no contradiction, and by giving up no point whatever, lest having yielded in one instance she should be obliged to yield in another: and if she be determined to persevere, she will inevitably accomplish her purpose. If the husband be disposed to sacrifice almost every thing for peace, it only serves to inflame her passion for mastery. The weapons used in this domestic warfare are numerous and powerful. If clamour will succeed, seldom any thing else is thought of. But as that will not always prove successful, intreaties, coaxing, continual teazing, tears, fits, and illness, are so many different modes of attack, perseveringly carried on until the husband surrenders.

If you should show Mr. Neville this picture of matrimony, the original of which I fear is frequently to be seen, he will perhaps say with the disciples, *If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.* To this however I would reply, that in numerous instances marriage is the most happy state in the world, and for both parties very far excels a single state. I have known many cases, in which there has been little or no sense of religion, where nevertheless good sense and good temper have so far supplied the place of better principles, as to make the parties tolerably happy. And I have also known many married persons, who, possessing the best principles, yet wanting good sense and a good natural temper, have not been happy. Grace, as has frequently been observed, is sometimes grafted upon a crab-stock. Where that is the case, without good sense and great self-denial, a person's own happiness, and the happiness of his connexions, will be considerably diminished. But instances are not wanting where good sense and good temper in both parties are connected with an experimental knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ. The conjugal union of such persons, endowed with a great portion of the Spirit of God, is the highest

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state of felicity of which mortality is capable. It bears a resemblance to the happiness of the blessed. And indeed the love of Christ and his church is represented by a happy marriage, in the Canticles, and also in the xlvth psalm, which is a beautiful ode upon the same subject, and from which Solomon possibly borrowed the idea of that fine allegorical poem. Such a union of hearts is strengthened by the consideration, that their interests are inseparable, and that nothing is undertaken or done by either but with a view to their mutual advantage. They behold themselves living as it were again in their children, and the love which each manifests to their offspring is another pleasing bond by which they are united. They love too as children of the same heavenly Father, destined to spend a happy eternity in his presence. By worshipping God together, and offering up prayer daily with and for each other, their reciprocal affection is invigorated. All these things united, form a friendship of the purest kind, which is strengthened rather than weakened by age and infirmities; for they remember with pleasure and gratitude their former mutual endearments, kindnesses, and good offices.

As I do not expect nor desire you to keep this from the sight of Mr. William Neville, I here acknowledge the receipt of his kind letter. In Mr. Clifford we see the true representation of a man, who has so long cast off the fear of God, that his accusing conscience, having received many rebuffs, first loses its feeling, and then its voice. Yet such characters are less injurious to society, in many respects, than furious bigots, who have no other reason for adhering to their sect or party than because they were born in it. I will pursue this subject no further, since I perceive it leads me to the consideration of your father's unkindness. You cannot indeed be insensible of it, but I would not willingly contribute towards the alienation of your affections from him. It also becomes you to consider, that unless divine mercy had prevented it, if not a similar, yet perhaps an equally culpable part would now have been acting by you.

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I was much affected with the generous proposal of Mr. Clifford, if you should marry with Mr. Neville's approbation. I think he has a right to an invitation to your wedding. Generous actions always meet with their reward from him who is himself the most beneficent giver; and although they may proceed from no better motives than vanity or self-love, yet I believe God never fails to reward the most trivial favour done to his people. Undoubtedly, if the favour is done because they belong to Jesus, it is of much greater value, and proves the person who does it to be a Christian.

I pray continually that you may fill up the station before you in an honourable manner, and that your conduct through life may promote the happiness of your husband, your family, and yourself. I entreat you both to accept my blessing. It is all I have to bestow at present. When I die, the little I possess will be yours.

I present my kind respects to all the friends of the Redeemer at Thornton Abbey. Believe me to be,

My dear niece,

Your affectionate aunt,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER LX.

From Mr. William Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR niece has shown me your kind letter, wherein you have displayed the miseries of unhappy marriages, and the blessings of happy ones. I hope we shall endeavour, with the divine assistance, to escape the rocks and quicksands you have pointed out; and we entreat you to continue your prayers for that purpose.

Agreeably, Madam, to your request I will relate the method which my God and father took to discover to me the errors of the church of Rome. I might properly begin

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as Paul did, and say, that after the straightest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. I and my sisters were educated at home, and were under the care of Signior Albino, in whose commendation truth obliges me to declare, that a more diligent, friendly, and faithful man could scarcely any where be found. We loved him as a parent, and met with a return of affection. It was his constant object to fortify our minds against heresy, with which name he stigmatized the opinions of all who, according to him, had rent the seamless coat of Christ by forsaking the communion of the Church of Rome. The arguments he used we had no doubt were unanswerable, and I am convinced he thought the same. The prayers which he gave me I repeated pretty regularly; I cannot say devoutly, for I thought that when I had said them all was well, and my sins would be forgiven. Signior Albino had assured me that this would infallibly be the case, and I believed him, who I thought knew better than I.

When I was about seventeen years of age, being a lover of books, and taking delight in rummaging among a great number of old volumes which were piled up in one of the garrets, I found among them *Fox's Acts and Monuments*, and my curiosity prompted me to see what the heretics had to say for themselves After reading a considerable part of the third volume, my belief in the infallibility of the church of Rome, and in its being the only true church, was shaken, though not destroyed. I wept at the relation of the sufferings of those valiant defenders of the truth who were burned at Smithfield, Oxford, and other places. I believed that they were good men, and that they were dealt very hardly with. I was sorry, if they were wrong, that they were so cruelly treated; for, said I to myself, this severity at best could only have made them hypocrites, by causing them to profess what they did not believe.

I was frequently wanted either by my father or Signior Albino, and when I was inquired for, the servants often used to say, Most probably he is in the garret. At one of

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those times, my father being determined to see what I was doing, came to me, and found me reading *Fox's Acts and Monuments*. William, cried he sternly, that is an heretical book, and you are not arrived at a sufficient age for detecting the sophistry of those artful people. I desire you to read it no more. I promised that I would not; and indeed I could not, for it was conveyed away, and, as I find by one of my dear sister's letters, given to Mrs. Privet, at whose house she providentially came to the sight of it. The effect which it had upon me I kept a profound secret. Indeed I was still persuaded that, on the whole, our religion was the best and safest; for I had found no protestant half so strict as my father and Signior Albino, or whom I thought half so good. Perhaps, so far as respects protestants in general, I was not much out in my judgment.

After I had lost my old companion, I met with another book which caught my attention. This was the *History of the Puritans*. I had always been taught to consider the church of England as having departed the least of all the Reformed churches from the church of Rome, which I believe is the case. The sectaries I had considered in the same light as Mr. Law considers poor people, namely, as the scum of the earth; and I determined to read this book, in order that I might be confirmed in my prejudice against them. The reading of it, however, had a different effect from what I have expected. It taught me not to take up an opinion of persons and things upon trust. It likewise shook my self-righteousness and vain confidence; for when I compared my formality with their piety, I perceived the difference to be inexpressibly in their favour. This caused me for the future to be more watchful of my words and actions, and more solemn in my prayers. But alas! I found myself unable to be so spiritual and devout as I saw those persons to have been whom I had so much despised; and the more I watched over my thoughts, words, and actions, the worse I appeared to myself to be. My trouble of mind was very great. I knew not what course to take. I durst on no account mention any thing to my father, or Signior

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Albino, or even to my sister, lest I should be accused of heresy. Nothing, however, was further from my thoughts than leaving the church of Rome; on the contrary, I was forming many schemes how to become more holy, and more devoted to God, in that communion. I had thoughts of becoming a monk; nay, I even wished to renounce the world, and become a hermit; and with these sentiments I was sent nearly three years ago to the English college at St. Omer's. My father thought this a wise precaution for preserving me from heresy and heretics. But in a Catholic country I found religion at a low ebb indeed. The poor, I perceived, were either careless or grossly superstitious: and the rich in general were deists or atheists, and talked and lived as if religion was only designed for the vulgar. I was shocked to see plays acted on the Sunday, and the time of the people occupied by other diversions on that sacred day. I had seen nothing of this kind at home: popery therefore appeared to me in a more suspicious light abroad than it had done in my own country. I associated with very few persons; for I soon discovered that great professions of friendship meant nothing at all, and repeatedly wrote to my father that I was weary of the haunts of men. All this time I knew nothing of salvation by Jesus Christ. I had indeed many just and dreadful apprehensions that things were not right with me respecting my eternal concerns; but I felt my misery, without knowing the remedy.

My leisure hours I employed in botany, a study of which I am very fond. Being a good walker, I frequently went several miles round the country. At one of these times, being near Mount Cassel upon a botanizing excursion, I fell into the company of a gentleman who spoke English nearly as well as myself. He resided in that town, and after some conversation about England and America, and upon several other subjects, invited me to drink tea at his house, which invitation I accepted. This event I esteem the happiest in my life.

M. de Bethune, (for that was his name,) a descendant of the prime minister of Henry IV. had resided more than

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twenty years in America. Having there obtained a competency by his industry, he determined to return with his family to France. Not, said he, that I in the least disliked my situation, the country, or the climate, except that the weather was sometimes extremely cold, and at other times too hot; but I had an ardent desire once more to behold the place where I first drew my breath, and to converse with my old friends and acquaintance. Alas! in twenty years the greatest part of them had passed out of time into eternity; and I had not been here more than a week, and taken a view of the haunts of my childhood, the house where I was brought up, and some other things, before I felt an anxiety to return: and not more than half a year elapsed before I actually formed the resolution of doing so. My son, who is in his twenty-fifth year, came over with his wife, whom he had just married, not doubting but a person with money might find a profitable employment any where. In this however we were mistaken: nothing presented itself which he approved, although we went to Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, and Bourdeaux. In consequence of this disappointment he and his wife set sail for New-York about a month since. He intends to travel through the States till he meets with a purchase to his mind, which being done, I and his mother, and my two daughters that you now see, intend to go to him. We did not accompany him, because a considerable part of our property is in France, which it is necessary for us to stay and collect together.

I have related these few particulars concerning a person to whom I am indebted, under God, for much more than my natural life; that knowledge with which eternal life is connected being far more valuable than mere existence. He is now returned to America. The day before my friends arrived at St. Omer's I had hidden farewell to him and his family. The thoughts of seeing each other no more in this world, were the occasion of much sorrow on both sides. He and his wife considered me almost as another son, and the children loved me like a brother.

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Young gentleman, said he, at our first interview, you have told me that you are sent to St. Omer's to finish your education; knowledge is undoubtedly excellent; but I wish to learn from your own mouth whether you possess that knowledge which is the most important. I was so unused to this kind of discourse, that I knew not how to reply. I therefore requested him to speak more intelligibly. My friend, answered he, you will one day die, and after death you will be either happy or miserable. What I ask you is, whether you have a good hope through grace that you will be eternally happy. I replied, that I took it very kindly that M. de Bethune should thus interest himself respecting me; and that I had had many thoughts on the subject, but was at present unprepared to answer such an important question. I added, that I should esteem it a very great favour if he would instruct me. My friend, said he, the Christian only has a well-founded hope of eternal life: and every Christian has that hope, either in a greater or smaller degree. Pray, sir, said I, are you a catholic or a protestant? A protestant, sir, replied he; but I do not consider this as any proof of my being a Christian, or a true worshipper of God; there are many wicked protestants; you have undoubtedly seen such in your own country. To be a Christian is to be like Christ, and to be godly is to be like God. Read with care our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus. You will there learn, that except a man be born again, he not only cannot enter into the kingdom of God, but cannot see it. *The world*, said the apostle John, *knoweth us not, because it knew him not.* If the Jews had known the hidden wisdom of God, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory: but, their minds being perverted by sin, they turned his glory into shame, and cast out his name as evil, in like manner as they afterwards did the names of his followers.

This brought to my mind all that I had read of the servants of God who were burned in the time of queen Mary. The catholics who burned them, and the Jews who crucified Christ, appeared to me to be persons of similar characters.

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I then asked M. de Bethune, whether there had not been a visible church of Christ in all ages. Not visible, answered he, to the world. The world saw the men, but did not know the dignity of their character. And I must continue to maintain, that except a man be born again, he is an utter stranger to the church of Christ in general, and to every member of it in particular. Our Lord promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against his church; but I think, Sir, you find, both in England and France, that the gates of hell do prevail against the majority of men called Christians, whatever be their denominations. The church of Christ, therefore, if he has a church upon earth, must be sought for, like any thing else that is hidden, or out of sight, until it be found.

These sentiments were new to me. If my hope of eternal life was weak before, it now entirely vanished. I had been educated in a belief that the church of Rome was the only true church of Christ, and that, all the promises of God being made to that church, I was safe in its bosom. The church of England, I knew, acknowledged the church of Rome to be a true church; and I thought that she could not separate herself from a true church without committing schism, and that therefore all her members were in a state of condemnation. Upon reading, however, Fox's Acts and Monuments, I admired the disposition of the martyrs; and when I read the Lives of the Puritans, I perceived in them a spirit which I was desirous of possessing. I sometimes thought that I could gladly have changed situation with them. These things occurred to my remembrance when I was conversing with M. de Bethune.

I asked him where I must look for the church he had been speaking of. If, Sir, answered he, you have eyes you need not ask this question; and if you are blind, it is in vain to ask it. Still keep in mind the words of the Redeemer, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*; and again, *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

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These words were arrows that pierced deeply into my soul. My grief, in spite of my endeavours to suppress it, vented itself in a flood of tears. At length I said, Pray, my dear Sir, what would you have me do? I can only, replied he, give the same answer which Paul gave to the Philippian jailor, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* Be so kind, Sir, said I, as to inform me what your reason is for supposing me to be an unbeliever. They who are born again, answered he, not only see the kingdom of God, but also, in general, discern who are not the subjects of that kingdom. I saw in you, when we first met, much that I approved, but lamented that I did not also see the Christian. I perceived by your answers to several of my questions, that your hope of eternal life was built upon your own righteousness. Mankind may be classed under two grand divisions, the regenerate and the unregenerate. The latter of these may be subdivided into the publicans, or the profane; and the Pharisees, or the self-dependent. The former, or those who are born of God, are composed of babes, young men, and fathers in Christ. The difference between these different classes of the regenerate consists not in the foundation of their hope of eternal life, for that is the same in all, but in their different degrees of knowledge. Will it be an improper question, Sir, said I, if I ask upon what *your* hope of eternal life is founded? By no means, replied he. My hope is the same as Peter's when he said, *We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved.* The soul of the Messiah was made an offering for sin. A Christian is distinguished from all other men by his embracing this truth, which is the great subject of divine revelation. Every man in a state of unregeneracy substitutes something in its room, as I perceive you have done. It signifies not what this something is, whether prayers or alms, vows of poverty, or vows of celibacy, fasting, or the mortifying of the body in any other manner, none of these things being of divine appointment. No name under heaven is given by which salva-

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tion can be obtained but the name of Jesus, nor any works beside his works, nor any sufferings beside his sufferings. This is the Christianity of the Bible, and it is written as with a sunbeam. But the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. The same blindness of heart which hinders the world from seeing the church of Christ, prevents their seeing the gospel of Christ. Books written in defence of Christianity may have their use with the divine blessing; but Christianity cannot be taught like geography or astronomy. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, must shine in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

These truths entered into my soul: I knew and felt their force. I acknowledged this to my friend. But alas, Sir, said I, I am a guilty sinner. It is true, replied he; for under the Christian name, you have been rejecting the Redeemer as the only Saviour of sinners. When you substituted other things in the room of that one oblation, you thought that you did right. Saul also thought the same, when he did many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and when he dragged men and women to prison. Christians have been thus persecuted both by catholics and protestants; for every man is by nature an enemy to the Christ of the Scriptures. If he call himself a Christian, he has substituted a false Christ in the room of the true, and his religion is the reverse of Christianity.

I ingenuously told M. de Bethune, that it was impossible for me to be more convinced than I was of the truth of what he had said. I desired him to pray for me. O my friend, said he, most gladly; I trust I shall ever pray for you. We are going to worship God in my family: will you join with us? To this I assented. Bibles being brought, his eldest daughter, who was about thirteen, read the twenty-second chapter of Genesis, which contains an ac-

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count of Abraham's offering up his son. My dear, said M. de Bethune, what do you think this chapter teaches? The divine intention, answered she, to provide a better sacrifice than Isaac, which intention Abraham prophetically intimated when he said, *My son, God will provide himself a lamb.* True, my dear, said he. It also contains a promise, that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed. This seed, promised to our first parents under the name of the seed of the woman, is the Saviour of sinners. The blood shed under the Mosaic dispensation, was the gospel preached to that people. If it be asked why God could not pardon sin without an atonement of infinite value, I answer, It is sufficient for us that he has informed us of its impossibility. *If*, said the apostle, *there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.* Sinners cannot yield a perfect obedience to a perfect law; and a holy God cannot be pleased with imperfect obedience, or with obedience to an imperfect law. Salvation, therefore, must be by mere mercy, or not all; and yet it could not have been by mercy at the expense of justice. God, in saving sinners has magnified his justice as well as his mercy, and has shown to angels and men the dreadful nature of sin by his detestation of it. And it is more than probable, that this display of its dire malignity will be instrumental in securing the everlasting obedience of many millions of creatures. Every attempt to save ourselves is not only an act of rebellion against the most High, and a contempt of the mediation of the Son of God, but resembles an attempt to wash the Ethiopian white, or to take from the leopard his spots.

The youngest daughter, who was about ten, having read the second chapter of Ephesians, and his son, a boy about nine, having read the second psalm, he kneeled down and prayed. I shall never forget with what fervour, accompanied by many tears, he recommended my case to God, pleading what Jesus Christ had done and suffered, and what he had promised to them who come to him for mercy. It was such a display of unaffected piety, and di-

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vine eloquence, as I had never before been witness to. I seemed to myself to be in a new world. I had once thought myself something, but now I saw that I was nothing. O my God, cried I, I am nothing but guilt and pollution in my own eyes: what then must I be in thine, who seest not as man seeth! Wash me, I humbly beseech thee, in the blood of Jesus Christ, and I shall be clean. This I believe was the first real prayer I had ever uttered. I had said many prayers, but had never prayed in this manner. My God heard in heaven his dwelling place, and sent from above, and took me, and drew me out of many waters.

M. de Bethune and his obliging and happy family entreated me to sleep at their house. The day being closed, I gladly accepted the invitation, as the gates probably would have been shut before I could have arrived at St. Omer's.

I had many interviews with this truly Christian family, and would gladly have accompanied them to America; but my love to my parent and sisters would not permit me to gratify this desire.

My dearest Miranda joins with me in the most affectionate esteem.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours very sincerely,
WILLIAM NEVILLE.

LETTER LXI.

From Mr. Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I AM very glad that I mentioned to you my bad state of health. I am now much better. Indeed I felt better the day after I began to follow your advice. I sleep well, and my mind is more composed.

I thought before that I was very temperate, and so I was,

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if compared with many others, but not sufficiently so for a person in trouble. About eleven o'clock I generally found myself sinking, and ate a slice of ham or other meat to remove my faintness. I dined at three, drank tea at six, and supped at ten. I ate meat both at dinner and supper.

I now take about eleven o'clock a small tumbler of red port and water warm, with a slice of toasted bread, and hope to leave this off when my stomach is strengthened by my new regimen. I dine about one; and the principal part of my dinner consists of pudding and a bason of strong broth. I eat a great proportion of onions, turnips, potatoes, and other boiled vegetables, with my meat, and sometimes no meat at all. I think I am better those days that I do not eat it than when I do. I do not think that I ought entirely to leave it off, but I shall find by experience how often I ought to eat it. It is my intention never to eat it above once in the day, except upon some extraordinary occasion.

I drink tea at five, and sup at eight. For supper I have sometimes boiled milk thickened with an egg, sometimes wine and water with toasted bread, and sometimes water-gruel.

I find that I am now not so sinking, and that I have a better appetite. Beside better health, good spirits, and sound sleep, another advantage attends this way of living. I used to be at a stand what to have for dinner and supper; I was first tired of this, and then of that; but now the plainest food is more grateful to me than the most dainty used to be.

I have consented, Madam, that my son and your niece shall be married on her birthday. My son has told you that the Mr. Cliffords, Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell, and Mr. Law are to dine with us. It had not been fully determined, when they were invited, that the marriage should take place on so early a day.

My family unite in best respects to you with,

Dear Madam,

Your sincere friend,

JAMES NEVILLE.

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LETTER LXII.

From Signior Albino to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

YOU have heard of the wonderful change which God has wrought in this family, and of the almost unexampled mercy which has been shown to me, a most guilty sinner. The mercy of God in saving me through Christ Jesus is infinite mercy. God is indeed love. I now know him not only to be the greatest, but the best of beings. After me no one will be obliged to despair. The Scriptures have long been a sealed book unto me; but whereas I was blind, now I see.

The correspondence between you, Madam, and my young friends, convinced me of this important truth, that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, nor governed by worldly maxims; that the Christian religion is intended to save mankind, and not to aggrandize them; and that it has nothing to do with politics, or the government of kingdoms. Civil governors have corrupted it, and exposed it to the derision of infidels, who in deriding this corruption of Christianity, have fancied themselves to be deriding Christianity itself. My detestation of popery exceeds, if possible, the blind zeal I lately had for its propagation.

I cannot doubt that God, in every age, has had faithful servants in that corrupt church, who were not of it. I trust the time will arrive, perhaps speedily, when there will not be a religious establishment in the world. God is proclaiming in the rising states of America, that true religion needs not civil aid. I believe he is there showing the nations of the earth his power to protect his own cause, and that it does not require to be propped by their unhallowed hands. In fact he has hitherto supported it in spite of all their opposition.—I will not say concerning spiritual Babylon, as was said concerning the typical, *Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.*

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No, I hope they will be slain by the sword which proceedeth out of the mouth of him who is called the Word of God, and then they will have reason, like me, to bless the arm that smote them.

With what contempt have I formerly looked upon the humble Thomas Livingstone! What folly was it in me to suppose, because I understood Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, that therefore I understood Christianity better than he! But my pride has been laid in the dust: there let it for ever lie! O my God, if I have one wish concerning myself, it is that I may be clothed with humility. I am nothing; and I pray that I may be willing to be accounted the last and the least.

I rejoice that my beloved pupil is about to be united to so amiable a Christian as your niece. I hope I shall never forget the gentleness, the humanity, and the affection with which she treated me, even while I was her bitter enemy. Charity, Christian charity suffereth long, and is kind. She overcame me much more effectually than if she had opposed me with all the virulence which human nature in its worst state can show. I afterward plainly perceived, that I was the vulture, and she the dove; that I was the lion, and she the lamb. It is my happiness that the lion hath been made to eat straw like the ox. May that glorious prophecy be more and more accomplished to the ends of the earth.

I have written a desultory letter, and have poured out my whole soul. I know you will rejoice with me, that one who was mad against the servants of the Redeemer is now sitting at his feet in his right mind.

I am, with great esteem, dear Madam,

Your friend and humble servant,

ANTONIO ALBINO.

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LETTER LXIII.

From Miss Barnwell to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

WITH the divine permission before this arrives at Islington, I shall have entered into a new relation. This morning my dear Mr. Neville presented me with a ring, by which I am to be bound to be his loving and obedient wife. I am indeed under every obligation, as well as the divine command, to be so, and to study in every thing to render him happy. I hope, when the knot is tied, I shall not relax in my duty. I beg, my dear aunt, your prayers for us, that we may enter into this solemn and sacred engagement in the fear of the Lord; and that we may endeavour to promote his glory in every part of our conduct, and in every period of our lives. How has my gracious God favoured me! How ought I to remember his goodness and his mercy, which have been very abundant to me from my birth to this moment! I pray that my whole life may be dedicated to his service.

My dear Mr. Neville yesterday entreated his father to take a part in the ceremony, by presenting him with my hand. He desired to be excused, observing, that the guilty part he had acted toward his dear Eusebia had made him determine to go mourning to the grave; and that he could not take that pleasure in our nuptials which he should otherwise have taken, since every thing served to remind him of the treasure he had lost.

Yesterday afternoon Mr. Clifford and his son called at the Abbey, as they were returning home from Belcaster. They staid to tea, and the discourse turned upon the truth of the Mosaic history. Mr. Neville, since he dined with Mr. Clifford, had frequently lamented that a man of his good sense should be so unwise as to espouse the cause of infidelity. He therefore determined to seize the first opportunity of endeavouring to show him the folly, as well as

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the guilt, of opposing divine revelation. An opportunity now presented itself; for upon Mr. Neville's asking Mr. Charles Clifford what Commentary on the Scriptures he had, and upon his replying that their steward, who is a very pious man, had lent him Henry on the Old and New Testament in six volumes folio, the following conversation took place.

Mr. Clif. Six volumes in folio! Certainly the Bible must be a very obscure book to need six volumes in folio to illustrate it: and yet I doubt, after all, whether the writer has proved the tale of Moses's dividing the Red Sea to be true.

Mr. Nev. It is very unfair, Sir, to carp at particular passages in a historian, and to contend that this or that fact is incredible. We should first examine the character of the author, and inquire whether marks of veracity are visible in other parts of his history; whether pride and vanity were his prevailing passions; whether he had sinister ends to serve by propagating a falsehood; whether he appears to have feared God; and whether his history was well received by the people of his time. Now, Sir, you must acknowledge that the Jewish historian and legislator will bear to be examined by all these criteria. Why then do you reject his testimony?

Mr. Clif. I cannot think Moses was a wicked man; but indeed, Sir, I cannot believe in Miracles. Only prove to me that any one miracle was ever wrought, and I will grant the pentateuch to be true.

Mr. Nev. What kind of proof do you expect? If that which is admitted for substantiating every other historic fact be admitted in this case, I can furnish you with it in plenty.

Mr. Clif. Prove it to me by your own certain knowledge.

Mr. Nev. If that were in my power, you would have just as good a right to question my testimony as that of other men, and probably would do so, concluding either that I was deceived as to the fact, or that the division of the waters was a natural phenomenon.

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Mr. Clif. You are about right.

Mr. Nev. With regard to myself, I have never heard nor read of any thing more wonderful than the diurnal motion of the earth, and its annual motion round the sun. In these works and ways of God we see great wisdom and great power exercised every moment. The Almighty not only caused these motions to commence at first, but he still continues them. The sun likewise has dispensed light and heat for several thousand years. These things certainly are as wonderful as the dividing of the Red Sea. The formation of man also at first, must have been an act of as great power and wisdom as the raising of him from the dead. A miracle is distinguished from the other mighty works of God in this way. The latter, being performed for constant and general utility, are seen every day; whereas miracles are performed occasionally, and for particular purposes. If I had never seen a comet, it would be unreasonable to discredit the evidence of those who have seen them. In like manner, if I have not seen the dead raised, or the eyes of the blind opened, I ought not lightly to doubt the testimony of those who have.

Mr. Clif. There is some reason in what you have said. He who formed the sun, and gave us life and breath and being, certainly *can* do every thing. But will he do any thing in vain? I cannot discover the utility of miracles.

Mr. Nev. If miracles have never been necessary, I will grant there never have been any. For my part, I do not perceive how Moses, who had been forty years absent from Egypt, could have accomplished the emancipation of such a body of slaves without a single act of resistance on their part, but by the intervention of miracles. Pharoah parted with them with as much reluctance as the West-Indian planters would part with their negroes. Hence arises another reason for the necessity of the miracles performed in Egypt. When they were in the wilderness forty years, without a succession of miracles they must have perished. And without the instrumentality of miracles, such a numerous body of people could not have been induced to em-

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brace a religion so different from every other, and so apparently contrary to their temporal interest.

Mr. Clif. I have had my doubts whether they ever were in Egypt, or in the wilderness. I confess, if they were, your reasoning would be conclusive.

Mr. Nev. Might you not as well doubt whether there was ever such a man as Moses? And when you have done this, you may also doubt of the existence of Cyrus, of Alexander, and of Julius Cæsar. But, not to mention how much the Mosaic history is corroborated by the testimonies of Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Trogus Pompeius, and other heathen writers, there is that internal evidence in the Scriptures which abundantly confirms them. The posterity of Abraham also now exist, and, with as little real piety in general as any people ever possessed, are invincibly attached to their own religion; and they have been kept a distinct people in all their dispersions, as their sacred books foretold they should be. The divine intention in thus preserving them is, that, when the time prefixed shall arrive, they may return to their own land. It cannot be doubted that they are descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose sepulchre was among them. The burying place of Rachael was well known. The carrying up of the bones of Joseph from Egypt was a public act; and the history of that, and of a thousand other things, could not have been imposed upon a nation, if fabulous. In the time of David literature had made a considerable progress, as the inimitable odes written by him, and by others of his age, testify. Wherever and whenever the pentateuch was composed, writing could not have been a very uncommon attainment, since the judicial law obliged him who divorced his wife to give her a certificate of it in writing. If the author therefore of the Jewish history had given a fabulous account, it would not have maintained its credit, but would have been contradicted by other historians. The pentateuch relates that the Israelites were not the original inhabitants of the land of Canaan. Their wars

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with the former inhabitants prove the truth of this assertion. Of the reality of those wars there is this presumptive proof. If the history had been fabulous, it would have been written under the influence of that disposition which all men have to extol the prowess of their ancestors and countrymen, and would have contained a continued series of successes. Circumcision and sacrifices, it is highly probable from the very nature of them, owed their origin to a divine command. The probability of this with respect to the latter is greatly increased, when we consider that almost every nation has endeavoured to render its gods propitious by sacrifices There must have been some cause of the universal prevalence of such a practice. Nothing in the nature of the thing itself is sufficient to account for it. A history, therefore, asserting sacrifices to be of divine institution, is highly credible. The children of Israel are represented as having been a most wicked and rebellious people while they were in the wilderness. Their posterity would not have received this account from any writer, if they had not known it to be true. The incest of Reuben, the wickedness of Joseph's brethren, and the disgraceful origin of a considerable part of the tribe of Judah, would not have been recorded by a historian who intended that his work should be read by the nation whose history he wrote, if they had not been universally acknowledged. His recording these things is a proof of his faithfulness and impartiality. The same may be said of the sin of Aaron in making the golden calf, undoubtedly in imitation of the Egyptian Apis, from which also no mean proof arises that the Jewish nation had been in Egypt. Other arguments might be brought to prove the truth of the Mosaic history; but these ought to convince a wise man that it is imprudent to oppose divine revelation, especially when that opposition will be followed by dreadful consequences if it is true, and can be of no service if it should be false.

Mr. Clif. I acknowledge the reasonableness of your last observation, and must also confess that your arguments in

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defence of the Mosaic history have some weight. I sincerely thank you for the concern you manifest for my welfare. But really, Sir, your endeavouring to prove the truth of these things gives me pain. Since it is not my interest that they should be true, it cannot be my interest to believe them. And indeed the greatest pleasure that I experience is, either to forget them, or to persuade myself that they are false.

Mr. Nev. Sir, I truly pity you. It is an error to suppose that to believe divine revelation would make you miserable: it would make you one of the most happy men in the world. Can a belief that God pardons sinners make a man miserable? Yet this is the subject of the Old and New Testament. Under the Old Testament Jehovah proclaimed his name, *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.* And in the New Testament the method of pardon is clearly revealed. A person's being a great sinner is no greater an impedement to his pardon than his being a little sinner. The only obstacle is, his treading under foot that remedy which alone can heal him.

Mr. Clif. My dear Sir, what you say I doubt not you believe; but it administers no consolation to me. If I believe any thing, it is that I am under the power of Satan: for whenever I purpose to do any thing that was good, or to alter my course of life, I was certain to be ten times the worse for it; so that now I have entirely left off resolving.

Mr. Nev. I feel for you. And do not you know the cause of these disappointments?

Mr. Clif. I have told you. I believe that I am under the power of Satan.

Mr. Nev. That undoubtedly is one reason, but not the greatest. You have rejected the only Physician of souls. You have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and have hewn out broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Mr. Clif. What then would you advise me to do?

Mr. Nev. My friend, you have attempted to *do* (as you

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justly term it) often enough already, and have not succeeded. The forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ is proclaimed to sinners, and they have nothing to do in order to receive it, but to apply to God for it in his name. But our merciful Father is beforehand with us even in this respect, since he who sincerely embraces the doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ, is in possession of his pardon, although he may be unacquainted with it.

Mr. Clifford thanked Mr. Neville, and told him he had a heart harder than the nether mill-stone. He said that he could not pray; but he begged that we would pray for him. He appeared to be much affected. Very few are called at the eleventh hour: yet there are some. I hope and pray that this gentleman may be of that number.

My letter being wanted for the post, I must conclude with presenting the respects of Mr. Neville's whole family, and with assuring my dearest aunt that I ever remain

Her dutiful and affectionate niece,

MIRANDA BARNWELL.

LETTER LXIV.

From Miss Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

THE task of giving you an account of my brother's marriage having at my desire been committed to me, and it being my intention to give you as early intelligence as possible, and to be particular in my account of the occurrences of the day, I will endeavour to put down things as they occur.

My brother, his bride elect, and myself went this afternoon to Ringdale, to drink tea with our rector, Dr. Mildmay, and to concert with him the plan to be pursued to-morrow morning. Mr. Barnwell, among other hard speeches to his daughter, having constantly prognosticated that she will be a beggar, and he and his wife being to

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dine here to-morrow, my father wished the marriage to be kept as secret as possible till he himself shall find it out by inference, which he certainly must do at dinner, as my new sister will sit at the head of the table, and as we shall be dressed in white.

Dr. Mildmay and the clerk are to be at church at half after eight. The Mr. Cliffords have promised to be here by eight. My father has fixed upon the old gentleman as a proper person for performing the ceremony of presenting the bride. This he intends to be a compliment to him, in return for his kindness in defending your niece against her father and Mr. Law, and for his generous offer if she should marry with my father's approbation. Although Mr. Clifford's intention cannot now be put in execution, it does not on that account make a less impression on my dear parent.

Dr. Mildmay is a gentleman of considerable learning, and of elegant manners. He possesses a most benevolent disposition, and which is better than all, preaches the pure gospel of salvation by Jesus Christ. But I am obliged to add, that I fear it may be truly said of him, as it was of the church of Ephesus, that he has left his first love. He married a lady with a great fortune, who is very affable, and who is what the world would term a very good wife. But a wife may have many excellencies, and not be born again. She may be a good wife in other respects, and not a suitable wife for a disciple and minister of Jesus Christ. Family prayer will drag on heavily, if the wife take no pleasure in that solemn duty After having been practised or submitted to with reluctance, it will many times be entirely discontinued, as it is I find in Dr. Mildmay's family. Eli, though a servant of God, stands lowest in the catalogue of saints, on account of his sinful indulgence to his family, which ended in their ruin, and in his own distress. Dr. Mildmay is an indulgent husband, and a kind master: and being a good-natured man, and keeping a plentiful table, his house is resorted to by many who call themselves his friends, but who, I fear, are not the friends of the Re-

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deemer. Such society preys upon the heart of vital godliness, and leaves scarcely the appearance of religion. Of what advantage is Dr. Mildmay's preaching the gospel, when his family, and all his parishioners perceive it has no apparent effect upon himself? Will they not compare him to a way-post, which points out the road to others, but does not move a step itself? And must not his real friends fear that, like a planet, he is a dark body himself, notwithstanding he enlightens others? How can a person who takes up the cross of Christ daily, who is dead to the world, who has his conversation in heaven, who has communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and who prays without ceasing, indulge himself in music, dancing, and cards, and in the company of irreligious persons almost every day in the week? Can he who believes that Christ came into the world to redeem him from his vain conversation, enter upon secret prayer, without resolving to break off every sinful indulgence, and without determining, like Joshua, that both he and his house will serve the Lord?

My brother related to Dr. Mildmay the unkindness of Mr. Barnwell to his daughter, because she would not promise to go no more into a meeting. The doctor behaved very differently from Mr. Law. He said, that he wished every person to go where he could profit most; that the going of his parishioners to meeting gave him no umbrage; that he could not doubt of the gospel's being preached there; and that he sincerely wished success to the gospel wherever it was preached. Indeed, Madam he is a most amiable man: and if he had married a wife who knew and loved the truth, he would probably not only have preached, but adorned the gospel. Riches may be bought too dearly. If his wife had not discouraged the practice of family worship, he would no doubt have continued it; and if the visits of irreligious persons had not been thus introduced into his house, closet prayer and divine meditation would not have received a deadly wound from the frothy and trifling conversation of worldly men.

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So far I had written last night. This morning Mr. Clifford and his son arrived at the Abbey a quarter before eight. My friend, said my father immediately, as you have made Miss Barwell the generous offer of five hundred pounds if she marry with my approbation, I request you to perform the ceremony of giving her to the bridegroom. In half an hour she is to be married to a young man of this parish, and the wedding is to be kept at my house I will do it with pleasure, answered Mr. Clifford; and I will not only do what I promised, but I will endeavour to assist them in other respects. Mr. Charles Clifford said the same. Some severe observations were made by Mr. Clifford on the conduct of Mr. Barnwell which I shall not repeat.

A servant came to tell us that Dr. Mildmay was in the church waiting for us. Your niece and I immediately repaired thither, where we found Thomas and Mary Livingstone. We were soon joined by the Mr. Cliffords and my brother. The old gentleman looked about him when he came in. Where, cried he, is the bridegroom? I suppose master Livingstone is not the young man my friend Neville told me of? Miss Barnwell, said he, where is your intended husband? Indeed, Sir, said she, I expected him here by this time. Well, Miss Barnwell, said my brother, will you accept of *me?* Sir, replied she, curtsying, I cannot refuse the honour you do me. I did not think, Sir, said Mr. Clifford to my brother, that I should have the pleasure this day to congratulate you on your marriage. I assure you I do it with great satisfaction, and am happy you have made so wise a choice. I shall esteem it an honour to present this lady to you; and I am persuaded you will receive a fortune in her, if not with her.—The ceremony was soon performed, to the great satisfaction of all present.

I intended to relate the whole of this day's proceedings; but a post would be thereby lost. I therefore conclude with assuring you that I am, Dear Madam,

Your sincere friend,

And faithful servant,

MARIA NEVILLE.

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LETTER LXV.

From Miss Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I CONCLUDED my last letter with the pleasing account of my having a new sister. After we had breakfasted, during which time many obliging things were said by the Mr. Cliffords, my father observed, that if his dear Eusebia had been here, his happiness would have been as complete as mortality can possibly enjoy. This is the sorrowful string which my parent is continually striking: and it renews my grief, on account of the unkind treatment she received from me. I can only say with Paul, that I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

Mr. Clifford remarked, that persecution on account of religion came with a bad grace from his friend Barnwell, who had no religion at all.. He indeed, said he, goes to church pretty constantly, except in September, when partridge shooting comes in; but he knows nothing of Christianity, nor of the sects into which it is divided. Every one who dissents from the church of England he calls a Presbyterian.

If, said my father, there were no other proof of his want of religion, his being a persecutor would abundantly prove it. The less a man knows, the more positive he generally is. But I have the least reason of any person living to reproach Mr. Barnwell. I always considered him as a person destitute of religion. But a person may be very zealous, and his zeal may be exceedingly culpable, and even worse than irreligion. This, Sir, was my own case.

Pray, Mr. Neville, said Mr. Clifford, what in a few words do you think is the essence of Christianity? This question was productive of the following conversation.

Mr. Nev. The love of God, with which the love of mankind is invariably connected. And he only loves God, who loves divine revelation; for divine revelation contains the mind of God.

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Mr. Clif. Wherefore is that worship given to a man which is due only to God? This practice, and the wicked lives of Christians, have been great stumbling-blocks to me.

Mr. Nev. No Christian worships a man. The Socinians, it is true, have laid this to our charge. We worship the Messiah, the Son of God, but not as a different God from the Father: much less do we believe his body and soul to be God. Is it impossible for him who is every where, and can do every thing, to manifest himself to his creatures?

Mr. Clif. I do not know that it is: for although neither our bodily senses, nor our mental powers, can comprehend infinity, yet it does not follow that God cannot manifest himself to his creatures in a manner and degree suited to their capacities.

Mr. Nev. You have given my own, and every Trinitarian's sentiments upon this subject. Let me further ask you, If God were graciously disposed to manifest his moral perfections to his rational creatures, would he act improperly if, assuming a form like their own, and thus putting himself upon a level with them, he were to dwell among them?

Mr. Clif. I should esteem myself perverse, were I to say that such a way of proceeding would be improper. I will also grant that a Being, possessing infinite perfections, cannot be immediately discerned by finite beings. I ingenuously confess, therefore, that you have answered my objection.

Mr. Nev. I hope, Sir, I shall live to see you a Christian. There is nothing in Christianity contrary to right reason, although every thing in it is contrary to the reason of those men, who, through the influence of the god of this world, are dupes to their own folly. But further, do you think it possible for God and his rational creatures to be at variance, and that they, through their perverseness, should hate him who is the fountain of natural and moral perfection?

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Mr. Clif. I have had too sad experience of this.

Mr. Nev. And I likewise.

Mr. Clif. Your sins have been mole-hills: mine have been mountains.

Mr. Nev. I think the contrary. You have not murdered a child because she feared God; however, we will not dispute this point. Granting that an enmity exists between God and his creatures, must not a reconciliation take place before they can for ever dwell in his presence?

Mr. Clif. There can be no doubt of it.

Mr. Nev. I think not. What method then did it become the divine Being to take, that he might render his enemies a grateful, loving, and obedient people? If he had forgiven them at the expense of his truth and justice, might they not at some future period have violated the divine law with hopes of impunity?

Mr. Clif. Perhaps that might have been the case. But I think I see what you are aiming at, and I beg you to proceed.

Mr. Nev. I hope, Sir, you will soon acknowledge, that there is nothing in Christianity so contrary to common sense as its adversaries would insinuate. Suppose the divine Being were to pardon some of these rebels, would it not be wise in him to suspend the pardon upon such conditions, as that they might behold in it a terrible display of his justice, and of his severity against sinners, as well as a display of his mercy?

Mr. Clif. How can this be accomplished?

Mr. Nev. Would not the exhibition of a voluntary surety, acting and suffering in their stead, answer this end?

Mr. Clif. I think not. Does not Christianity confound moral justice with commercial? It is the latter only which admits of a substitute. Crimes are not transferable, like property. Commercial justice is satisfied, if the debt be paid by a surety, the recovery of property being the only end sought after. But where the end is example to the community at large, justice requires the punishment to be inflicted upon the person of the offender. In case of mur-

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der, for instance, the death of a substitute would not make a proper impression upon society of the evil of the crime, much less of the justice of the government which admitted it.

Mr. Nev. This is one of the most plausible objections against the doctrine of the atonement that I have met with; and if the Governor of the world were obliged to proceed according to the rules of strict distributive justice among mortals, I should acknowledge it to be unanswerable.

Mr. Clif. If your scheme require the supreme Being to depart from what is accounted justice among his creatures, how will you prove it to be rational? Does not reason dictate what is right between man and man?

Mr. Nev. May not a human government, in extraordinary cases, deviate from the letter of the law, and yet adhere to the spirit of it? May not the ends of distributive justice be answered, while the strict rules of it are dispensed with?

Mr. Cliff. Give me an example.

Mr. Nev. You remember the case of Zaleucus?

Mr. Clif. Yes. He made a law, I think, that the eyes of adulterers should be put out; and his son was the first transgressor.

Mr. Nev. It was so. And partly from a regard to righteousness, and partly from compassion to his son, he commanded that one of his own eyes should be put out, and one of those of his son.

Mr. Clif. There was something extraordinary in this proceeding. It did not accord with the rules of strict distributive justice.

Mr. Nev. True; and yet it was adapted to answer all the ends of good government in a greater degree than if the son had lost both his eyes.

Mr. Clif. How does that appear?

Mr Nev. Would not the fact be rendered more notorious? And would it not become a subject of universal conversation?

Mr. Clif. Undoubtedly.

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Mr. Nev. And would not the public be powerfully impressed with a sense of the determination of the lawgiver to maintain his law?

Mr. Clif. So indeed it should seem.

Mr. Nev. Did it not at the same time afford such a proof of love to the son, as must tend to melt his heart into repentance?

Mr. Clif. Certainly.

Mr. Nev. It follows, that the spirit of the law was preserved, though the letter of it was dispensed with; and that the whole procedure was not only reasonable but wise, and worthy of a great legislator.

Mr. Clif. I perceive whereabouts you are; and I acknowledge that I do not at present see the impropriety of the application.

Mr. Nev. Give me leave to ask, whether, while you accuse Christianity of confounding moral and commercial justice, you yourself do not confound those laws and rules which are binding on the subject, and proper, in ordinary cases, with those which are suitable to the legislature, and proper only in extraordinary cases? You do not blame the government of your country, after the rebellion in 1715, for not executing strict distributive justice upon all the individuals who had joined with the Pretender: on the contrary you praise its clemency. I confess, however, that I consider it as a proof of that imperfection which is common to all human governments. Mercy could not, in many instances, be exercised but at the expense of justice: and I suppose the rebellion which followed in 1745, might be the consequence of the escape of great numbers in the former who had deserved to die. Could our legislators have devised an expedient, by which the justice of the country would, as to the spirit of it, have been fully satisfied, the lives of the deluded people spared, and their hearts also melted into repentance, you would have applauded them still more, and would not have thought of objecting that they had deviated from those rules of justice which ought to be adhered to in ordinary cases.

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Mr. Clif. I acknowledge it.

Mr. Nev. The truth is, my friend, if God form a system of operation, it may be expected to surpass the ordinary conceptions of puny mortals. Such is Christianity. It is an expedient worthy of the divine Being; an interference, whereby he saves a perishing world in a way consistent with the glory of his moral government. While it breathes peace and good will to men, it ascribes glory to God in the highest. Your conceptions must be expanded, if you become a Christian.

Mr. Clif. Well, Sir, I will endeavour to think of these things. I certainly, as well as many others, have confounded the corruptions of Christianity with Christianity itself; and being averse to a religion which cannot be made to agree with my course of life, have never seriously examined its evidences. I feel to this hour like a man in chains; nor do I know how to extricate myself. Pray to the Lord for me, a poor miserable sinner!

You will easily conceive, Madam, the pleasure which this conversation gave us. I could have wished for a continuance of it; but the Mr. Cliffords and my brother had agreed to take a ride before dinner, which prevented it.

About noon Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell came in their chariot. There were in the parlour when they entered, my father, my new sister and myself. The usual salutations being ended, Mr. Barnwell, looking very angrily at his daughter, and then turning to my father, said, I doubt not but this rebellious girl has given me a fine character. She has set up for a saint, and most probably has represented me and Mrs. Barnwell as her persecutors. I know you, Sir, to be a humane and worthy man; but your generosity, in this instance, is sadly misplaced. I wish you not to countenance her. If she had a drop of my blood in her veins, she would scorn thus to be an intruder. She has a home to reside at, where she might have been as happy as any person living, if her head had not been turned about religion; but she has ruined herself, and she must abide by the consequences.

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I know, said my father, you are much mistaken respecting some things of which you accuse your child, which renders it probable that you may err concerning the rest. You intimate, Sir, that she has given you a bad character. So far from it, that I assure you she has never mentioned you but with reverence and esteem. That you have persecuted your own child, I cannot doubt: but I have learned this from others, and not from her; and I am persuaded she is more sorry on your account than on her own.

I perceive, Sir, replied Mr. Barnwell, that you are prejudiced in her favour. But permit me to ask what you would do, if your daughter were to degrade herself and you by going to hear a cobbler hold forth in a barn, and by associating with the dregs of the people?

I would accompany her, Sir, answered my father. It is true I have, like you, thought otherwise, and have in consequence of it lost a most amiable and dutiful child. Were I to say that I have been her murderer, I should come but too near the truth. If you should ever be so happy as to become a Christian, you will not think it dishonourable to worship God in the company of poor people, or in a mean place.

A Christian! cried Mr. Barnwell with surprise; do you take me for a heathen? I neither rob nor cheat, and I pay every one his due.

You suppose then, said my father, that the heathens did not pay their debts?

I am not able, Sir, replied he, to dispute with you; but I know very well when children are disobedient to their parents. And I assure you, Madam (speaking to my sister) when you come home, I will make you turn over a new leaf, and behave a little more like a Christian than you have done, whether I be a Christian or not. If you had not lost all sense of shame, you would have returned long before this, and would not have trespassed on the good nature of Mr. Neville. Had I turned you out of doors, which indeed you well deserved, you could but have acted in this manner.

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My dear sister answered only with tears.

My father told Mr. Barnwell, that although he had not literally turned his daughter out of doors, he had behaved as cruelly to her as if he had. I have been informed, continued he, that you would not suffer her to come into your presence, but made her live in the kitchen with the servants. You could not expect this to be kept a secret. Judge then how such conduct must injure a child in the eyes of the world, who, not taking the trouble to enter into an examination of particulars, would certainly justify the parent. What man of character would marry a wife whom her parent had accused of being undutiful? That it was her duty to obey all your lawful commands, I grant: but if you commanded her to do any thing contrary to the laws of either God or man, you, Sir, were the aggressor, and not she. Your conduct however has not produced all the effect that might have been expected from such behaviour of a father. A young man has offered to marry her, and I believe they love each other. What fortune do you intend to give her?

I suppose he is a Presbyterian parson, answered Mr. Barnwell, contemptuously. If so, I don't doubt but they love each other. Such refuse find out each other by instinct. I will not give them a shilling. Mr. Charles Clifford once paid his addresses to her: but forsooth she expected him to say his catechism to her.

Indeed, Sir, said Mrs. Barnwell, Miss Barnwell has acted very imprudently, as well as undutifully; and Mr. Barnwell plainly foresees, that if she should not be reduced to beggary, yet she will sink into one of the lower orders of the people.

My father, perceiving that talking to Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell was of no use, left us. After this Mrs. Barnwell said tauntingly to my sister, Your pride has been so great, Madam, that you would not send for any clothes or linen, and I suppose by this time you have scarcely any left: but if you will not ask for them, and very submissively too, were I Mr. Barnwell you should never have them.

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Madam, cried my sister, truth obliges me to say, that I should not have experienced the ill treatment I have received from my once tender parent, had it not been for the ill offices you have constantly rendered me. He has been the dupe of your artifice. With regard to clothes, if my father will give me nothing, I ought not to wish to make a grand appearance. I hope I shall neither ask for them, nor want them.

At these words the colour came into Mrs. Barnwell's face, and she poured forth a torrent of abuse, with which I shall not defile my paper. We left them, and went to dress for dinner, and I then wrote so far my account of the proceedings of this happy day.

I believe when Mrs. Barnwell sees my sister at dinner, she will not think that she stands very much in need of clothes. It cannot be long kept secret that there is a wedding. Mrs. Mildmay and all our family will be in white, and Mrs. Neville will sit at the head of the table.

Mr. Small, a tenant of my father's, has just called to know whether we have any commands which he can execute in London. I will send this letter by him, as you will have it a day sooner; and should any thing occur worth relating, either your niece or I will write to-morrow. She is now with me, and desires your prayers for her happiness, and that she may conduct herself with propriety in this new state. It is agreed that she shall write to-morrow. She then hopes to inform you when we shall be in town.

I am, dear Madam,
Your faithful and obedient servant,
MARIA NEVILLE.

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LETTER LXVI.

From Mrs. Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

MY DEAR AUNT,

MISS NEVILLE has informed you of my interview with my father and Mrs. Barnwell, and of some of her unkind speeches. She has however considerably altered her behaviour, and we are all invited to dine at Barnwell Hall. Mr. Neville and my dear husband would not promise to accept the invitation, till they had consulted me. I told them that the sufferings I had endured in my father's house, my God having much more than recompensed me, I considered as though they had never been. Besides, said I, how much better is it to suffer injuries than to do them. These reasons satisfied my friends, and we are to go on Monday next. On Tuesday we shall prepare for our journey; and on Wednesday evening, with the divine permission, Mr. Neville and Miss Neville, and my dear Mr. Neville and myself, hope to see you at Islington in good health.

Maria intimated in her letter how elegantly I was dressed. This I submitted to, rather than desired. In future I shall be left in that respect to my own judgment.

When we were called to dinner, my friends were in the dining-room, and I went without ceremony and placed myself at the head of the table. This and my gay appearance astonished my father and Mrs. Barnwell. She sat at my left side, and immediately looked at my hand. She afterward said, that the moment I sat down she knew I was married. She remained silent; but my father could not conceal his surprise. Am I at a wedding, cried he to Mr. Neville, or am I dreaming? My girl at the head of your table, and dressed like a princess? This is what I cannot comprehend.

I think, Sir, replied Mr. Neville, there is no difficulty in understanding that every one does not view your daughter

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in the same bad light in which you have done. The head of the table is the place where my son's wife ought to sit.

Silence ensued for nearly half a minute. My father then said, My friends, I am astonished; but I am happy, and I am thankful. I cannot forget that I am a father, nor did I ever forget it. I acknowledge that I have treated my child very roughly, and I am sorry that I have done so. I did it because I considered her as rushing upon her own destruction: it gives me pleasure that I have been mistaken.

Sir, replied Mr. Neville, you have said enough. My son did not ask your consent, for two reasons: first, because he saw that your mind was unhappily alienated from your daughter; and in the next place, because he wished to show you that he expected no portion.

Be assured, Sir, said Mr. William Neville, that every thing which has passed is buried in oblivion. You had an aversion to strictness in religion, thinking it would injure your daughter in the esteem of many persons, as it certainly has done. We all know you acted according to your views of propriety, and we excuse you. Indeed, all would be well, were there not another tribunal at which the issue will be more important. The plea of ignorance will there be over-ruled, because the statute-book of heaven is in your hand.

Friend Barnwell, cried Mr. Clifford, you and I have been very unwise. I, for rejecting a volume which promotes the happiness of those who follow its instructions, in this world, and which will, I doubt not, make them happy hereafter; and you, for thinking yourself a Christian when you do not know the first principles of Christianity. Whenever you talk about it, you represent a person's paying his debts as the whole of Christianity: whereas that is what men of all religions are agreed in.

I know so much, Sir, answered my father, as not to be drawn into a dispute about it. Besides, I feel myself so very happy in my new son-in-law, and my other new relations, that I have no mind to put myself out of humour.

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Well, my dear children, continued he, I hope, as a proof of your being reconciled to me, that you will dine with me on Monday next, together with all my friends who sit round this friendly board.

This, after I had been privately consulted, was agreed to. Many obliging things were said to us by all present, the repetition of which would be uninteresting. Even Mrs. Barnwell was not sparing in her compliments. They came indeed with not the best grace from her; but neither I nor my friends were disposed to be offended. My father was happy in a high degree on account of my marriage: for notwithstanding his dislike of religion and of religious people, yet his hatred of religion in me was chiefly because he thought it would hinder my wordly advancement; and as he thinks that is secured, every thing else is with him of small importance.

I should here conclude, did I not know that you would be glad to hear the substance of a discourse between Mr. Neville and Dr. Mildmay.

The doctor began with saying, that as God in his kind providence had delivered Mr. Neville and his family from the errors of popery, and which was of much greater importance, had brought them to the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ, he hoped he should have the pleasure of seeing them at church.

Mr. Neville replied, I would gladly attend, Sir, on your ministry, if I could conscientiously do it; for I believe you have clearer views of the nature of the gospel than the clergy of the church of England in general, or even than many dissenting ministers: but I am not convinced either of the lawfulness of religious establishments, or of their usefulness.

If, Sir, answered Dr. Mildmay, you have any scruples about the lawfulness of attending at the national church, I will not urge it; for I wish every person to go to that place of worship where he can gain the most advantage. I preach, I am persuaded, the same gospel which the apostles preached; but I am not so uncharitable as to suppose that it is

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not also preached among dissenters of different denominations. I wish, however, to hear your objections to religious establishments.

I disapprove of them, Sir, answered Mr. Neville, because they are unscriptural. We read of them no where in the New Testament, except in those parts which predict the corruption of Christianity. The revelation of John, especially, treats of the grand apostasy which was to take place in the Christian church through the interference of the kings of the earth. From the moment I understood the predictions of that apostasy, I had not one word more to say in behalf of the church of Rome: and as soon as Doctor Mildmay views them in the same light that I do, the church of England, and every national church, must sink in his esteem. Our Lord declared before Pilate, that his kingdom was not of this world. Every church invested with worldly power, and endowed by the state with riches, is related to that apostate church which is drunken with the blood of the saints. However corrupt in doctrine or in practice private churches may have been, they have never been bloody and persecuting churches. Happily for them, that has not been in their power.

May not every religious duty be practised, said Dr. Mildmay, and every religious blessing be enjoyed, as well in the church of England as among dissenters?

I think not, answered Mr. Neville; Christians in church-fellowship are warranted by Scripture to expect considerable advantages, provided they conform to the rules laid down by their divine Master, to which rules a national church cannot conform. They are not united together merely to hear the gospel in one building, but it is also their duty to choose one to preside over them, who they judge will watch for their souls, as one that must give an account; and suitable directions are given them for that purpose. Their pastor must be a lover of the gospel, a lover of good men, and one that rules well his own house; none of which qualifications is deemed of any importance in a national church. It is likewise the duty of a

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Christian church to watch over the lives and conversations of their pastor, and of each other, and to consider themselves as one body, of which Christ is the head. They jointly partake of the Lord's supper, thereby professing to be members not only of Christ, but of each other. When men destitute of the Spirit of Christ come in among them unawares, and when this is manifested by their ungodly conversation, provided they do not put away the unclean from among them, they may expect that the candlestick of the gospel will be soon removed, and that they will become a mere worldly society. When this however happens, such societies, although exceedingly corrupt, are not antichristian, in the same sense with national churches, as they are described in the epistle to the Thessalonians, and in the Revelation.

Permit me to ask you, Sir, interrupted Dr. Mildmay, whether it is not a fact that God has greatly blessed the preaching of the gospel of late years in the church of England?

I grant it, Sir, answered Mr. Neville; and you will not deny that God has also raised up some ministers in the church of Rome who have preached the gospel, and whose labours have been blessed. God may see fit not to leave himself without witnesses in the most corrupt communities; and while they are there, we rejoice that they bear so much of a testimony for him as they do: but the precepts of God, and not his providence, are the rule of duty. What passed between Jonah and the mariners appears to have been blessed to their conviction, if not to their conversion: yet Jonah was at that time where he ought not to have been. God has commanded, saying, *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* The people of God who live in the neglect of this command, may do so for want of considering its import, and the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom; and God may suffer this partial blindness to happen to them for wise and gracious ends; it may be, among other things, for the

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calling of a greater number out of those very communities: yet while they continue to partake of their sins, it behooves them to tremble lest in some way they receive of their plagues.

I cannot deny, Sir, said Dr. Mildmay, that there is some appearance of truth in what you say. Yet I think that religious establishments are and have been useful. I do not, however, maintain them to be of divine appointment. For a church to be an ally of the state is certainly a defect, which necessarily ensues from the interference of government in religious matters. At the same time, I cannot but think that learned men, set apart from the common vocations of life, have been and are still serviceable in the defence, illustration, and propagation of the Christian religion. Now the maintenance of such men must be provided for, either by the community at large, in which case individuals must be compelled to contribute their different quotas, or by voluntary subscription. An answer to the question which of these two ways is the most eligible, will I think determine whether national churches are a blessing or not.

I am aware, answered Mr. Neville, that a compulsory contribution is preferred by many to one that is voluntary, especially for its rendering the clergy independent of the people: but this independence is purchased by a much greater dependence on their superiors, which constitutes no doubt the very reason of the partiality that statesmen have commonly felt towards a national church. This dependence on the great will be certain to lead numbers of them to pay court to vicious characters, and to associate with them in polite vices. Were Congregational ministers to act in this manner, they would lose their hearers. I do not say that they are not influenced by higher motives; if they are true Christians they certainly will be so: but it is an argument in favour of any constitution of things, that instead of encouraging conformity to the world, it co-operates with the exhortations of Scripture to a holy life.

It has often struck me, said Dr. Mildmay, that poor dis-

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senting ministers, whose dependence is often upon two or three opulent hearers, must be under greater temptations to unfaithfulness, than those whose incomes are rendered certain by the laws of the country.

And did it never strike you, answered Mr. Neville, that poor curates, whose dependence is often upon their rector, or whose hopes of preferment rest upon the favour of some irreligious patron, are under equal temptations? The truth, however, is, that we must expect temptations in every situation; and it should be our concern that they may never meet us out of the path of duty. If we keep that path, we may hope for strength equal to our day; but if we leave it, though we should escape one temptation, we shall fall into many others. The church, as you well know, originally supported its ministers by voluntary contributions, and then it was that the Lord blessed it. The support of a gospel ministry is enjoined in the New Testament; and a compliance with Christ's injunctions is made a test of love to him. A constitution which precludes this test, must have an ill influence both on ministers and people; while that which gives scope to it, has a tendency to unite them. I have heard dissenting ministers speak of the liberal donations of their people with tears of pleasure; not merely, as they said, on account of the temporal comfort it afforded to them and their families, but because fruit thereby abounded to the account of their brethren. And you, Sir, are not ignorant that persons unfriendly to the gospel, as all men naturally are, confound tithes and other church rates compulsorily levied upon them with Christianity, and are thereby hindered from paying a proper attention to it.

Whether the doctor was at a loss for a satisfactory reply, on whatever was his reason, he concluded with observing, that numberless imperfections are attendant upon every thing in the present state, and that it becomes each of us to act as well as we can in the sphere in which Providence has placed us.

Mr. William Neville has seen what I have written, and

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has copied it, that he may add it to his sister's collection of our letters. He desires his dutiful respects to his dear aunt. Accept the same from,

Dear Madam, your dutiful niece,
MIRANDA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXVII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE left France, and do not expect to see England any more. I have been cruelly treated, but I am thankful it is no worse with me. Since my escape from St. Omer's I have been robbed of my clothes and money, and, which I exceedingly lament, of our correspondence, which I had fairly transcribed. I long to hear how my brother does. I hope my much loved but misguided parent treats him with more tenderness than he has done me. I pray that God may renew him in the spirit of his mind, and my sister also, and Signior Albino. May the unkind treatment I have received from them never be placed to their account. I think I have a prospect of supporting myself by my industry. God has been very kind to me. When I can inform Mrs. Worthington how to direct a letter to me I intend to write to her again. My love to Miss Barnwell, to my dear brother, &c. I have had but a minute or two to write in, and I am informed that unless I finish my letter this moment I cannot send it. Most affectionately yours,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXVIII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Mr. Charles Clifford.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED the enclosed letter this morning by the penny-post. It is impossible to describe the surprise and

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perturbation into which it threw me. I had scarcely power to open it. Who could have expected that my dear Eusebia was in the land of the living! What joyful news will it be to her father! I was afraid to send it to him, and I therefore send it in this cover to you. You, Sir, can open it to him by degrees, as you perceive he is able to bear it. What poor weak creatures we are! Good news or bad alike distress us. Well, my dear Sir, it is our God who preserves us when we go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters. But I cannot learn from her letter whether she was robbed by sea or land. How strange that she has not mentioned where she was when she wrote! She does not expect, she says, to see England again. I hope she has not been taken by an Algerine corsair. I think that cannot be the case; for she says that God has been very kind to her, and that she has a prospect of supporting herself by her industry. She had but a minute or two to write in. It is surprising that the person who received the letter was so unkind as not to stay four or five minutes. It is evident that she would have said more if she had had time. It is a mystery which time only can unravel. She intends to write again, and to inform us how to direct to her.

You, Sir, I understand, are to dine with Mr. Neville to-morrow. I have been thinking that you will not receive this letter before dinner. I wish you could have it soon enough to take it with you. I have thought what to do. Mr. Neville receives his letters about six o'clock in the afternoon. I will get my servant to direct it to you at Thornton Abbey, as I doubt not you will be there.

You will please to tell my friends how much I rejoice with them. Assure them that I will not delay a moment to communicate any further intelligence. We must wait patiently till it arrive. I wish you every happiness, and am,

Dear Sir, your sincere friend,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

P. S. It will be some hours before the post goes out. I

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will employ part of the time in writing a few thoughts, as you desired, upon the truth of the Scriptures.

Notwithstanding the Old and New Testaments were written by so many persons, and at such distant periods, the writers appear to have been all influenced by the same spirit. They represent God as a holy and righteous Being infinitely opposite to sin and sinners. The servants of God too in every age and nation, under the Old Testament dispensation and the New, have drunk into the same spirit. In the writings and lives of none of the heathens is piety discoverable like that which appeared in the patriarchs, in Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Ruth and Boaz, and even in Eli, notwithstanding all his imperfections. Hannah, also, and Samuel, David, and the other writers of the Psalms, and likewise the prophets, were filled with love to the true God; a God so excellent, that whenever the inspired writers speak of his character or of his works, their language is ennobled; and by the conveyance of grand ideas in simple and plain words, a perfection of sublimity is produced, which causes their writings as much to exceed all others as the glimmering light of a glow-worm is outshone by the lustre of the sun. The gods of the nations are indeed idols; and the writers and writings that treat of them are like unto them, when compared with those that describe the Creator of the heavens and of the earth.

In the writers of the New Testament we find a continuation of the same spirit which dwelt in the writers of the Old. We find the same elevated views of the Deity, the same love to him and the same fear to offend him: and a divine morality, whereof the love of God is the foundation, pervades both the sacred volumes. The writers of the New Testament, it is true, like those of the Old, had their different natural excellences, which are visible in their writings: but in their love to God and to the souls of men, in their fortitude, self-denial, charity, humility and heavenly-mindedness, it is difficult to say which of them excelled the rest. Paul is conspicuous for strength of reasoning, diligence, and resolution. Luke shines as a faithful narra-

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ter, and as a man of unaffected modesty; for the last of which excellences no other proof is necessary than his never mentioning himself in the Acts of the Apostles, though it is evident he was the companion of Paul, and had a principal hand in the things he related. Peter has written but little; but that little is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. The gospel, the epistles, and the Revelation of John, as they are manifestly the works of the same writer, so they breathe the same spirit of love to God, and of good will to men. The writings of each of the sacred penmen bear internal and inimitable marks of their genuineness, which the spurious writings pretending to be the works of the apostles evidently want.

Frequently, through the divine influence, the excellence of the sacred writings, and the holiness of their authors, produce a belief of the truth of our most holy religion in unlearned men, who are unable to comprehend acute reasoning and elaborate investigation. Ask a poor illiterate Christian upon what evidence he believes his Bible, and he will probably tell you that he feels it to be true. In this answer there is no enthusiasm. His meaning is, that the divine truths are worthy of the God who revealed them; that they do his heart good like a cordial; and that he is filled with love and gratitude for the mercies therein revealed, and with a longing desire to be conformed to the divine precepts, which he knows to be just and good.

The moral excellence of the sacred writings, however, can impress very forcibly none but those who are born of God, and who have received the same spirit with the writers of them. But there is another proof of their divine orginal which is calculated for general use, namely, the fulfilment of prophecy.

Prophecy delineates the dispensations of God towards the Jews in all ages; the Babylonish captivity; the calamities suffered by the nations which surrounded the land of Canaan; the deliverance by Cyrus; the persecutions under Antiochus Epiphanes; the history of the Assyrian, Persian, Macedonian, and Roman monarchies; a minute

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history of Alexander's successors; the rise, reign, and fall of antichrist; and a very great variety of other events, relating both to nations and to individuals.

The prophecies which relate to the Messiah, I cannot in a short letter enumerate. I may, however, say, that he was spoken of as a potent prince, as a mighty deliverer, and yet as a great sufferer. The two first parts of this character, according to the literal sense, were quite agreeable to the inclination of the Jews in general: and even the apostles were not free from this prejudice till some time after the resurrection of our Lord. An impostor would have taken advantage of this prejudice, as all impostors pretending to be the Messiah have done. But the general tendency of our Lord's discourses on this subject was to show his followers, that he came for nobler purposes than to make his countrymen a great and flourishing nation; that his mission was intended to deliver them from the dominion of Satan, and to make them possessors of an everlasting kingdom; and that, instead of making them greater than they were in this world, it was intended to expose them to reproach, and sufferings of every kind. When many of his followers came to understand that their condition was not to be bettered in the present life, they walked no more with him. The Jews to this day expect a Messiah exactly similar to what their ancestors expected. But their expectation is vain; for a Messiah is already come, whose character is perfectly correspondent with the prophecies on which they found their hopes.

Jesus, in his life, his sufferings, and his death, is minutely described by the Jewish Scriptures. An artful person might have contrived to fulfil these prophecies in what related to his own conduct; but to contrive what was to be done to him by others, even to the manner of their putting him to death, must be acknowledged to be an art which few are equal to, or, if they were, would choose to practise, all impostors being disposed to make the most of their deceptions in the present world.

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I have filled my paper, and must therefore bid you and all my friends adieu.

LETTER LXIX.

From Mr. Charles Clifford to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

WHAT a treasure did your letter contain! I little thought I should any more see the writing of that dear young lady. It is impossible to describe the surprise and joy which were manifested, and even the tears which were shed on this occasion, especially by the good Mr. Neville. Indeed the joy was more than we could well bear.

When your letter was brought, we were all at tea. I looked at the direction, and perceived that it came from London, and was directed for me at Mr. Neville's. I was astonished, not being able to conceive who in London could know that I was there; and my astonishment was increased by my not knowing the hand. Finding in it a letter directed to you, I opened it, and, looking at the signature, beheld Eusebia Neville. I had so much command over myself as immediately to rise and go out. I was reading in another room both the letters, to my great astonishment and joy, when a servant was sent by the company to remind me that they waited for me.

I was at a loss how to break the affair to Mr. Neville, since a sudden excess of joy has often proved as fatal as immoderate sorrow. I endeavoured, therefore, when I went in, to compose myself as much as possible. My father, however, having perceived when I went out, that I was greatly agitated, cried out upon my entering the room, Charles, what is the matter? I am certain this letter has greatly discomposed your mind.

Sir, said I, this letter contains some very good, and some very bad news.

Who, said he, could know that you were to be here today? This is a very mysterious affair.

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I replied, that by some means or other it had been known, or I should not have received a letter here.

Mr. Neville and all the company were silent, expecting I suppose to hear something very interesting. Not daring to gratify their curiosity, I introduced a new subject of conversation, in which while the company were engaged, I privately beckoned Mr. William Neville to follow me out.

My friend, said I, this letter contains something very important respecting your family. This introduction (as he afterwards told me) alarmed him very much, and he knew not what to think. Showing him the back of the letter directed to you, I asked him whether he knew the writing. My sister! cried he; it is my dear sister's. I did not give him the letter immediately, but desired him to be calm. I then informed him that I had some hopes that his Eusebia was alive, but that I knew not even in what country she was.

I had not been so secret as to elude Mrs. Neville's observation. She was alarmed, and came to us. Pray, Mr. Clifford, said she, what is the matter? I know your letter contains some intelligence in which we are greatly interested. Mr. Neville replied, My sister, we have reason to believe is alive; but we know not where she is: all we know is, that she is neither in England nor in France.

Returning to our friends, we found them about to take a walk in the wilderness, whither we accompanied them. I kept near Mr. Neville, and asked him whether he should not have put off his mourning at his son's wedding. I said I wore mine, because I had not entertained the most distant apprehension of that happy event.

My dear Mr. Clifford, answered he, I must say as Jacob did concerning his son, I will go down into the grave unto her mourning.

It was undoubtedly, Sir, replied I, the intention of Jacob to do so; but I cannot applaud him for it, since it becomes every creature to submit to the divine will. Yet he did not go to the grave mourning, as he said he would. And so with regard to your child, it is possible she may yet be

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alive. There is no certainty of her death: it has been probable only at present.

O Sir, cried he, very much affected, it is but too certain.

And so, said I, Jacob thought concerning his beloved Joseph. The probability too in his case was greater than in yours. His son's coat was brought to him torn and bloody, and without its owner: whereas, in your case, it is only related that a vessel was wrecked, that a woman who was in it was drowned, and that a bundle belonging to your daughter was saved. But can it be certainly known that one woman only was in the ship, and that she was your daughter? Or because her clothes were lost, that therefore she perished? Had I reasoned thus, I should not have visited all the towns upon the English and French coasts. It is true I did not find her: yet I do not despair of seeing her again.

Pray, Sir, exclaimed he, will you answer me one question? Do you know where she is? Have you not heard something about her?

Indeed, Sir, replied I, I do not know where she is; but I do not despair of her being alive. The letter which came when we were at tea, informs me that the woman who was drowned was not your daughter.

O my dear Sir, cried he, laying hold of one of my hands with both his, I beseech you to put me out of this cruel suspense. Tell me what it is you have learned.

The good man trembled from head to foot. I was therefore afraid to proceed, and yet had gone too far to retreat. It is very little, Sir, said I, that I know; and even that little I was afraid to inform you of. You must wait with patience. A few posts, I hope, will bring us further intelligence.

I am able, said he, to bear any thing you have to tell me. Say therefore whether she is alive.

I believe she is, answered I, but cannot certainly tell. It is not yet known what country she is in; but this I know, that she was not drowned.

O my child, my child, exclaimed he; I thank my good and gracious God; I shall see my child again before I die.

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He desired me to show him the letter I had received. I told him I would gladly do it when we were in the house. In the meantime I desired him to compose himself.

What a happy day, cried he, is this wedding day of my son! Two children are added to my family in one day.

My dear Sir, said I, if God in great mercy restore her to you, and if I should have the happiness of possessing an interest in her affection, I hope I shall meet with no impediment. . . . .

You are worthy of her, interrupted he; I should prefer you to the greatest prince in Europe.

This afforded me great pleasure. I returned Mr. Neville the most sincere thanks, and told him truly, that I should prefer a union with his daughter to the possession of an empire.

By this time we had reached the house. Being seated, I gave him his daughter's letter. And written, cried he, in a transport of joy, with her own hand. Having read it, he put it into his bosom. O Mr. Clifford, cried he, I have been a cruel parent. I do not deserve such a child. But my heavenly Father has, in every period of my life dealt with me, not according to my sins, but according to his abundant mercy in Christ Jesus.

All the company in the wilderness, as soon as they heard the joyful tidings, came, and congratulated Mr. Neville and each other on this unexpected resurrection as it were from the dead.

News in a country village flies with great rapidity. It was not half an hour before the inhabitants gave a proof of their good will to Mr. Neville's family, by ringing the bells. On the green the boys having collected some faggots, made a bonfire; and in the evening every house in the village was illuminated; even the smallest cottage was decorated with three or four candles set in pieces of clay. I confess that in my eye, these humble attempts of the poor to show their good will to a family which has always been attentive to their interest, appeared more magnificent than the splendid illuminations I have seen in London.

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The latter proceeded from abundance: the former were a sacrifice to gratitude offered by penury.

It being evident that our friend was neither in England nor in France, many conjectures were formed where she could be. Dr. Mildmay thought she was in the Austrian Netherlands, that country being so near to St. Omer's. It was my opinion that she was gone to Switzerland. Signior Albino thought it more probable that she was in Italy. Mr. Barnwell thought she was gone to Ireland. He said that she would be coolly looked upon in a foreign country without clothes or money; but that if she were in Ireland, where she might assist in a boarding-school, or be employed as a governess, it was like being in England. However, we all agreed that it was impossible to know which conjecture was right, or whether any, till another letter should arrive.

I did not sleep a minute all night. My mind followed her to every country in Europe, and even to America and the West-Indies: but such thoughts are vain and unprofitable.

Ought I to confess to you, Madam, that I am much more uneasy than I was when I thought she was dead? The joy I first experienced was suddenly damped by the consideration, that she will inevitably have given her hand to some happy lover before I shall again see her, or at least that she will be so far engaged, as not to be able to recede with honour. At all events she is lost to me for ever, or at least till our kindred spirits shall meet where they neither marry nor are given in marriage. These are the thoughts which disquiet me. On the other hand I console myself by reflecting, that whatever shall be the event, it was first planned, and is now executing by infinite wisdom, and that on the whole it will be for my good. These thoughts calm my mind. I consider that every Christian has a cross to bear after his Lord, and a fiery trial to be tried with; and that if it be the divine will that this should be my trial, I ought to submit.

In a strange country—discarded by her parent—without

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resources—without a protector—if honourable proposals should be made to her (and what man is there who would not be proud to call her his?) marriage is what she cannot avoid. I must therefore endeavour to forget her, since it is certain I shall never see her but to increase my grief.

I thank you, Madam, for your remarks on the truth of divine revelation. I hope they will be blessed to my confirmation in the faith. About a week past my father and I drank tea at Mr Neville's. That good man took great pains to convince him of the truth of the Mosaic history, and I hope with some good effect. I have had a great deal of conversation with him on the subject, I have also shown him your letter, and lent him your correspondence with my dear Eusebia and Mrs. Neville. He is now exceedingly thoughtful, is much in his closet, and does not as formerly make a jest of religion. Like myself, he has had but little pleasure in his infidelity. It is a desperate game, at which every thing may be lost, but nothing gained.

The moment you receive any further intelligence, you will be so obliging as to favour me with a line.

I am, dear Madam, your much obliged,
And most obedient servant,
CHARLES CLIFFORD.

LETTER LXX.

From Mrs. Worthington to Mr. Neville.

DEAR SIR,

I CONGRATULATE you and all my dear friends at Thornton Abbey respecting your dear child. I hope soon to have the pleasure of knowing where she is, and of informing her of the great and happy change that has taken place in your family, which tidings will be as joyful to her as the news of her being alive can be to us.

We rejoice that she is in the land of the living. It is

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right to do so; for life is undoubtedly a great blessing. We ought not, however, to mourn immoderately for our friends who die in the Lord; for though life is a blessing, yet to depart, and to be with Christ, is far better.

The union between your worthy son and my dear niece gives me great pleasure. I hope and believe she will be a wife proper for him. She is frugal and industrious, and dislikes ostentatious pomp and expensive pleasures. She is not fond of company, yet will I doubt not endeavour to render every one happy whom Mr. Neville shall honour with his friendship, or invite to his table.

It depends not a little upon a wife, whether the fear and worship of God shall be kept up in a family. If through different cares the time for family worship should be exceeded, it is her duty kindly to call off her husband from the affairs of the world to the worship of God.

Flavia is an industrious woman, and would be thought religious. But when her husband reminds her that it is time for the family to be called together, it is generally too soon, or too late, or she is engaged, so that though she does not expressly refuse, yet she submits with so ill a grace, that it is well if the duty be not at length totally neglected.

The case of Dr. Mildmay proves, that no consideration should induce a Christian to marry an unbeliever. Wit, beauty, riches, or all of them united, are but a poor compensation for the want of divine wisdom. Mrs. Mildmay was rich, young, gay, and sensible. These qualifications were too highly prized. Dr. Mildmay should have sought for a woman who was meek and frugal; who loved God; and who loved him for the sake of the truth which he preached. These would have been endowments of substantial value. Concerts, dancing, cards, ungodly associates, unprofitable entertainments, and vain discourse, are poor accompaniments to preaching the gospel. The love of these things, and a life of faith on the Son of God, are seldom found under the same roof, and never in the same person.

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If Dr. Mildmay had been the pastor of a dissenting congregation, and had had all his present temptations to associate with carnal companions, and to live and act like the men of the world, he could not have done it. He would have received such reproofs from some at least of the members of the church, as would have rendered him very uncomfortable; and if he had persisted, either he would have been dismissed from the pastoral office, or his pious hearers would have forsaken his ministry. But in the church of England, irreligious ministers are so frequently imposed upon the people, that they congratulate themselves if their pastor possesses any good properties. This is a necessary consequence of the dependence of the church upon the state.

It affords me pleasure that something like a reconciliation has taken place between my brother-in-law and his daughter. I am no friend to contention in any form.

Mr. Charles Clifford has deserved well of your family. When we have the happiness to see your daughter, I hope he will meet with that esteem he merits. If, Sir, you had utterly discarded her, that would have been no impediment to his union with her. He therefore has some claim to her regard, independently of his accomplishments, of his fortune, and of his being a Christian.

I expect every hour to hear from her. I think she can be at no great distance.

Wishing you and all my kind friends a pleasant journey, and above all the divine favour,

I am, dear Sir, your sincere friend,
And very humble servant,
MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER LXXI.

From Mr. Charles Clifford to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I INTEND, with the divine permission, to accompany Mr. Neville and his family to London. I promise myself

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much happiness in the company of such valuable friends. The conversation of the servants of God is a source of much consolation. Under the Old Testament dispensation, they who feared the Lord spake often one to another.

I mentioned to Mr William Neville yesterday at Mr. Barnwell's, where we dined, the hopes I entertained of his sister's writing again to you in a very little time. He told me that his father had received a letter from you, and that I had a zealous advocate in Mrs. Worthington. I ought to thank you, Madam, and all my kind friends, for your favourable opinion of me. I certainly behold an infinite excellency in the gospel method of salvation by Jesus Christ, and cannot but perceive that the spirit of all the inspired writers is similar, and their views of the divine Being as a just, a holy, and a merciful God, the same. I am also convinced that the servants of God under both dispensations, have had the same confidence in the divine mercy, and the same spirit. These things abundantly prove to me the truth of divine revelation. Yet I am not without my fears, that I should one time or another imitate those disciples of Christ who went away and walked no more with him. I earnestly pray that my God and Father will never suffer this to be the case.

You will expect, Madam, to hear what conversation there was yesterday at Mr. Barnwell's. As far as my memory shall enable me, I will endeavour to relate the most interesting part.

There were present Mr. Neville and his family, Dr. Mildmay, Mr. Law, my father, and myself. After dinner, the principal speakers were Dr. Mildmay, Mr. Neville, and my father.

The doctor began the debate with observing, that he had been considering what Mr. Neville had advanced in behalf of dissenting congregations, and against religious establishments, and that he was very far from being convinced that the latter were not both as useful and as scriptural as independent churches. The fact is, said he, the precise mode of church government is no where ascertained and appoint-

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ed in the New Testament: it is therefore left to the discretion of Christians to frame such constitutions as shall best comport with their local circumstances. When a whole nation became Christian, it was the duty of the chief magistrate, if he thought Christianity likely to promote good government and good morals, to provide for the support of it: and if it was divided into sects, to give the preference to that sect which was the most numerous, because the few ought always to submit to the many. If the majority of the people of England were Independents, the religion of that sect ought to be the established religion.

It is impossible that it should be so, replied Mr. Neville. The very term, Independents, denotes that, as Christians, they do not acknowledge any human authority, nor call any man master on earth. But do you think, Sir, that if the religion of the Independents were established, the Episcopalians, after having paid their own ministers by voluntary subscription, would with a good grace contribute toward the maintenance of the Independent ministers?

Ought not the determination of the majority to be submitted to? cried Dr. Mildmay.

Be it so, replied Mr. Neville, yet the determination of the majority is not always just; and injustice will operate in time to the ruin of empires, as well as of individuals. A private trader cannot expect long to thrive, but by an upright conduct, and uniform justice in his dealings: and what is true concerning one or two or twenty men, will be also true concerning twenty millions.

Sir, said Dr. Mildmay, you are mistaken if you imagine me to be an enemy, either to the Nonconformists or to justice. As I have a sincere love to my country, and also a considerable interest in its welfare, it is my desire that justice should be done to every member of the community, since the throne can only be established by righteousness. Nevertheless, Sir, I am a friend to religious establishments. A minister whose subsistence depends upon collecting and pleasing a crowd, and who lives in constant bondage to tyrannical and insolent directors, al-

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though a man of worth and ability, is but a genteel beggar. Many dissenting preachers, with a view of increasing their subscription, use a vehement oratory, and even adapt their doctrines to the pleasure of a capricious multitude.

I think, replied Mr. Neville, I answered this objection before; but since you repeat it, I again say, that the post of duty is the post of honour, by whatever temptations it may be surrounded. The greater the temptations of dissenting ministers, the greater is their glory in overcoming them. But the picture you have drawn, is the picture of fancy, and not of truth. Show me, Sir, the dissenting ministers you speak of, who live in bondage to tyrannical directors, and who, to raise their subscriptions, conform their doctrines to the pleasure of the multitude. I believe that the bulk of them are esteemed and revered by their hearers. Voluntary subscriptions are not a sufficient inducement to men of ability, possessing an ambitious disposition, to undertake the pastoral office. Dissenting ministers are in general animated by the love of God, and of the souls of men. This stamps a dignity on their persons, and insures to them a respect from their hearers, of which those ministers are totally destitute, who, disregarding their people, and disregarded by them, cringe at the levees, and flatter the vices of the great. If some ministers of a warm temper, and of a lively imagination, use too vehement an oratory, yet proceeding from men of worth, it is infinitely preferred by their hearers to the cooler delivery of men who have not religion at heart.

Truly, Sir, said the doctor, I cannot view things in the same light that you do.

Interest, Sir, cried my father, has blinded millions. You are upon a bad plan in the church of England, unless the religion of Jesus Christ be considered as an invention to aggrandize the clergy. But if the aim of the clergy be to gain men over to true religion, tithes form a considerable obstacle; for while they are praying and preaching, the farmers are thinking about their grain, their wool, their

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lambs, pigs, milk, eggs, apples and the like, the tenth part of which is taken from them, so much against their inclination.

I acknowledge, Sir, replied Dr. Mildmay, that there is too much reason for these remarks. But with regard to myself, I can appeal to my neighbour Mr. Neville, that I take none of these tithes in kind. For the small tithes I accept a compensation much below their value; and every farmer rents of me, I believe to his satisfaction, the great tithes belonging to his farm. More than this I cannot do. However, I deplore the mode of paying the clergy of the establishment by tithes, as much, Mr. Clifford, as you or any person can do, because it renders them in general objects of dislike to their hearers, whom it also makes inattentive to the gospel which they preach. But the imprudence of the clergy in exacting their dues with rigour, merits a part of the blame. In consequence of my lenity in this respect, my parishioners attend upon my ministry, not only with reverence, but, if I may crédit them, with thankfulness.

I believe, Sir, said my father, you endeavour to give as little offence to your parishioners as possible: but how few instances have we of that kind! A few exceptions plead not in favour of a general evil.—To this Dr. Mildmay made no reply.

Anxiously expecting to hear that you have received a letter from my dear Eusebia, I continue,

Dear Madam, your most obedient,
And faithful servant,
CHARLES CLIFFORD.

LETTER LXXII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

IN my last letter I informed you of my intention to escape from St. Omer's.

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During my short residence in that city, I had contracted an acquaintance with a Miss Dangerfield, whose father had left London to avoid his creditors. She told me that his failure was owing to numerous losses which he had sustained; and that he would soon return, his creditors having agreed to take a small composition. I thought this would afford me a happy opportunity of returning to England, and of visiting you till some place could be found in which I might acquire a livelihood by my industry. I therefore told Mr. Dangerfield, that I would pay all the expenses, if he and his daughter would immediately accompany me to England. To this he readily agreed.

The afternoon before my escape, he told me that, at the house of a person who lets out carriages, he had met with a gentleman who wanted a conveyance to Lisle for a lady and her daughter, the next morning as early as the gates should be opened; and that he and the gentleman had hired a coach with three horses. He added that the coach would hold only four persons, but that he would ride on the outside.

This information gave me pleasure, especially as the lady, he said, was born in London, though she now resided in France: I also thought that by going to Lisle I should elude pursuit.

I slept but little that night. My brother was ignorant of my intention to escape. Rising early in the morning, I packed up my linen and other valuable things in as small a compass as possible, and putting them under my cloak (to avoid the suspicion of the servants) set off for Dangerfield's lodgings; but he and his daughter were waiting for me at a little distance.

We went to the place where we were to take coach. In a short time the lady and her daughter arrived who were to accompany us to Lisle. She was of the middle size, and had glossy black hair, and fine arched eyebrows of the same colour. Her features were regular, but her complexion pale; and an habitual smile, and a sweetness of disposition visible in her countenance, rendered her, if not

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what is termed handsome, yet very pretty and agreeable, which is much preferable. She was something more than thirty years of age; and her daughter, a very amiable young lady, was upwards of thirteen. As I never could ride backwards in a carriage without being sick, she insisted that I should ride forwards with her, and that her daughter should sit with Miss Dangerfield. This little act of kindness, together with her being my countrywoman, soon made us acquainted. She told me that both she and her husband were born in London; that they were of the Hebrew nation; and that he had resided more than twenty years at Amsterdam, where he was extensively engaged in the mercantile profession.

In the course of my conversation with this lady, I learned that she and her husband are Christians; that their conversion was brought about through the instrumentality of an excellent friend of theirs, a member of an English Congregational church at Amsterdam; and that they are now members of the same church. After congratulating Mrs. Levi (for that was the name of the lady) with respect to this happy event, I gave her a particular account of my sufferings, and of my flight from a most tender parent, whose only fault that I knew of was his attachment to a religion, called indeed Christianity, but not to be found in the sacred volume, except in the prophecies concerning the corruptions of our religion which were to take place in the world.

This amiable lady felt for my distress, and was obliged to wipe from her cheeks the tears which were occasioned by the recital of my calamities. My dear young lady, cried she, I cannot but sympathize with you. My friends were as much irritated against me on account of my becoming a Christian, as yours against you on account of your becoming a protestant.

About nine in the morning we arrived at Lilleres, a small town about fifteen miles from St. Omer's, and stopped at the Golden Goose. Our coachman told us that he should stay about an hour, as he wanted something to be

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done to one of the wheels. After breakfast Mrs. Levi and I proposed to take a walk round the town, and asked Mr. Dangerfield and his daughter to accompany us. He replied, that he had an acquaintance whom he wished to see; and the daughter said, that it would be better for her to stay and take care of my bundle and the other parcels, which I thought to be kind and prudent. After we had walked about half an hour we returned. When I inquired for the young woman whom I had left with my parcel, they said that they thought she had gone with me, as they had not seen her since I left the inn: yet no one could remember her going out. It immediately occurred to me that I was robbed of my clothes and money; for Dangerfield having told me that it would be prudent to take nothing in my pocket but a little silver, lest we should be robbed, I had followed his advice. The thought of the situation I was in, without clothes, without money, without friends, and in a foreign country, so overcame me, that I sunk back in my chair, and was insensible, till I opened my eyes, and saw several persons about me, rubbing me, and holding spirits of hartshorn to my nose. I then perceived that I had swooned away; and I was truly sorry that I was come back to a world so checkered with misery. The good Mrs. Levi, who saw the cause of my distress, encouraged a pursuit of the thieves, by offering five louis d'ors to any person who should overtake and bring them back. Several persons went different ways in pursuit, but returned without success, to whom she made handsome presents. But her kindness to me is far beyond my ability to describe: my own parent when I was the object of his esteem, could not have behaved with greater tenderness.

We were obliged to get into the coach, having staid an hour extraordinary. During our journey to Lisle, she continually assured me that Mr. Levi would take a pleasure in rendering me every service in his power. At the same time she insisted upon my receiving ten louis d'ors

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as an immediate present.—Oh, my dear friend, how many ways our merciful father has to support his people! He will never leave them nor forsake them; and as their day is so shall their strength be.

About eight o'clock in the evening we arrived at the Hotel de Bourbon at Lisle, where we found Mr. Levi just come from Paris. The appearance of this gentleman pleased me. He had an open countenance, and a habit inclining to corpulency; he was of the middle size, and about fifty years of age. He was very complaisant to his lady and to me also, though a stranger: and indeed she had observed to me, that their minds were so similar, that time had added the most cordial friendship to the tenderest affection.

Mrs. Levi withdrew with her husband for a few minutes, during which time she appears to have given him an account of my situation, and to have recommended me to his patronage. For on their return he said, My dear Miss Neville, do not in the least regard what has befallen you. Rest assured that in Mrs. Levi and myself you will find protectors and friends.

I was so overcome with the gratitude I felt towards my benefactors, and with a sense of the divine goodness in casting me in their way, that I had not power to make a reply, but burst into a flood of tears which I could not for some time restrain. When they had subsided, I fell on my knees, and cried out, I bless the almighty Author of my being, the kind Parent of the universe: and I thank you, my kind friends, for your goodness and compassion to a stranger. May our heavenly Father grant you an everlasting reward.

There is no pleasure, replied Mr. Levi, superior to that of alleviating the distresses of the servants of God. Nay, there is even a satisfaction in doing good to the wicked, as it is instructing those by our actions who will not attend to the divine precepts.—Mrs. Levi and her daughter, likewise, said many kind things.

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I retired to rest early, and, rising betimes, wrote this long letter before breakfast.

I am, dear Madam, with great esteem,
Your affectionate friend,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXIII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

AS life is a continued series of changes from happiness to misery, and from misery to happiness, much unavailing anxiety might be avoided, were we to do our duty in our present circumstances, and to leave future events to Him who clotheth the lilies of the field, and who does not disregard a falling sparrow.

I have related the joy I felt at my escape from St. Omer's; the trouble I was in at being robbed; and the change of the scene from misery to happiness, in consequence of the uncommon regard shown to me by Mr. Levi and his family. After I was in bed, I was again rendered unhappy by considering the disagreeable situation my dear brother will be in when my father shall have been apprised of his having left the church of Rome. Your niece came next into my mind, together with the brutal treatment of her unfeeling parent. Nor did I forget my dear father, my sister, and father Albino. I felt no resentment on account of their cruel treatment of me, but earnestly prayed that God would show them the evil of what they had done, and bring them to true repentance. I then thought with anxious concern about the place I should go to, and the means I should use for my future subsistence. But how much better it would have been to have left these things entirely to Him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will. By taking thought, I could not add one cubit to my stature.

Just as I had finished my former letter, Miss Levi came to my room. She is an affectionate young lady. There is

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so much innocence and cheerfulness in her behaviour, that it is impossible not to love her.

In the room where we had supped the preceding evening I found Mr. and Mrs. Levi. I do not say that my reception was kind; it was more than is commonly understood by that term; I was received with the greatest tenderness. At breakfast Mr. Levi said that we were all invited to dine at Mr. Asher's, a relation of his who lives on the opposite side of the square.

Mr. Levi, said Mr. Asher after dinner, I never was more surprised than when I heard that you had left the religon of our ancestors, and embraced a religion by the professors of which so many of our nation have been murdered.

Mr. Levi. Would it be right, Sir, to judge of the truths delivered to Moses, by the rebellious behaviour of our forefathers in the wilderness; by their worshipping the host of heaven; and by their sacrificing their children to Moloch? Or ought we not rather to judge of them by the miracles which Moses and the other prophets were enabled to perform; by the historical account of their divine origin; and by the holy lives of thousands who adhered to the Lord in the worst of times? Even now it would be unfair to judge of the writings of Moses and the prophets by the lives of many, who yet would be offended if we were to question their being the disciples of Moses.

Mr. Asher. You seem to acknowledge our religion to be the true religion; how is it then that you have abandoned it?

Mr. Levi. I have not abandoned it. I have now many evidences of its divine origin which I was formerly unacquainted with. I can truly say that I neither understood, nor fully believed the writings of Moses and the prophets till I became a Christian.

Mr. Asher. This is very wonderful. You did not believe our scriptures, till you believed in a plurality of Gods.

Mr. Levi. I believe in only one God; the great I AM; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

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Mr. Asher. Did not our ancestors put Jesus to death for professing himself to be equal with God? And, after his death, did not his disciples maintain his divinity, and pay him a correspondent regard?

Mr. Levi. I do not deny it.

Mr. Asher. And yet you believe in only one God. Explain your meaning.

Mr. Levi. Jesus Christ is God.

Mr. Asher. If you had lived in those days, and had heard a carpenter declare that he and Jehovah were one, would you not have thought him insane? Or if you had been a magistrate in the Jewish theocracy, and as such, a guardian of the honour of God and of the rights of men; and if you had thought this person to be in his sober senses, and an impostor, would you not have acted as our ancestors did?

Mr. Levi. Most probably I should, unless he had by some means proved the truth of his claims. And even if he had done this, the meanness of his condition, and my preconceived opinion of what the Messiah ought to have been, might, in concurrence with my native pride, have disposed me to join in the cry against him.

Mr. Asher. Do you think then that any evidence ought to have been admitted, that a person appearing to be a man, was the eternal Jehovah?

Mr. Levi. I think it ought; especially if the writings of Moses and the prophets had given reason for expecting that this would be the case. If it imply an absurdity that God should appear in human form, how do you account for the divine appearances to Abraham, and other persons, which are recorded in the Old Testament?

Mr. Asher. Does it not shock our reason to suppose, that the most High was an infant, a youth, a man, a poor man, and a mechanic; and that this performer of miracles should not protect himself, if he could do it, from a scandalous and painful death?

Mr. Levi. All these things are agreeable to our own prophecies. You will not say that the prophecies are

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contrary to reason: the accomplishment of them, therefore, cannot be so—If, however, I were conversing with an infidel, I would not decline the task of defending the reasonableness both of the prophecies and of their accomplishment. I would say, that it was not contrary to reason that Jehovah should manifest himself to men in a human body, and dwell among them: I would say, that it was not wonderful that this holy man should be despised and persecuted by wicked men. I would say, that it was not unreasonable that his human body, which was prepared to be a veil to his glory, should *grow up as a tender plant*, and increase from the diminutive size of an infant to the stature of a man. I would say, that it was not contrary to reason that he should permit himself to be put to death, who came to be a sacrifice for sin. I would say that it does not shock my reason that he who came into the world to *bear our griefs, and to carry our sorrows*, should become *poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich*. Independently, however, of this consideration, it would not have been more honourable to God if he had visited his creatures as a king, than as a mechanic; as a rich man, than as a poor man; or as an idle man, than as a laborious man. *The Lord seeth not as man seeth*. God has recommended industry in his word: why then should he not recommend it by his example? He has also honoured poverty, by choosing, in general, the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom: is it wonderful then that he should choose poverty as that condition of life wherein to reside among men?

Mr. Asher. If Jesus was God, are there not two Gods?

Mr. Levi. Jesus never professed to be another God distinct from his father, but that he was one with him. His being a man did not hinder but that he might also be God. Did he not appear to Abraham, and converse with him, before the destruction of Sodom? This appearance was in a human form: for Jehovah was one of the three men who appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, when he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day, as appears from the

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whole of the narration —Did not God appear to Joshua and say, *As captain of the host of the Lord am I now come; loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy?*—And did not the Lord send an angel before our fathers in the wilderness, commanding them to obey his voice, and to provoke him not; for he would not pardon their transgressions; the name of God being in him?—Now because God appeared in human form, you do not infer that there are two Gods.

Mr. Asher. These instances are not in point. Jesus was a man in reality. He had a human soul as well as a body.

Mr. Levi. Though not exactly similar, they are sufficiently so to answer your objection; for if Jehovah assumed the appearance of humanity, why might he not assume humanity itself?

Mr. Asher. Do not Christians in general believe that there are three persons in the Godhead?

Mr. Levi. Yes, they do; for they find the Old Testament abounding in language which they cannot otherwise understand; and in the New Testament they behold the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, constantly represented under personal names, approached in personal addresses, and receiving personal worship. They do not suppose, however, that the distinction in the Godhead is equal to that of three persons among men, but that they are, notwithstanding this distinction, one God, one eternal, self-existent Being.

Mr. Asher. How can three persons be one being?

Mr. Levi. They certainly cannot in the same respects; nor am I so much acquainted with the different respects in which they are three and one, as to pretend to find any thing among creatures by which to illustrate it. It is a mystery, which I can neither explain nor comprehend. Who by searching can find out God? The divine eternity and immensity are equally incomprehensible. On subjects like these, it is wiser to pause and adore than too curiously to inquire. There are mysteries in creation and providence: is it wonderful therefore that there should be

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mysteries in the word of God? It becomes us to be humble, and not to think of ourselves above what we ought to think.

Here the conversation on this subject closed.

The next morning after breakfast Mrs. and Miss Levi took a walk into the city, and desired me to accompany them. I little thought what was the design. My kind benefactors make it their study to heap favours upon me, which I fear it will never be in my power to repay, except with prayers for their happiness. We went to a linen-draper's shop, where Mrs. Levi bought a great number of articles which I supposed to be for herself, whereas the whole was intended for me. I felt myself weighed down by the favours I received, and so I told my kind benefactress. Miss Levi, perceiving my confusion, took hold of my hand, and said, My dear Miss Neville, you are my sister. Did not my father call you his child? Do not think it strange that children should be provided for by their parents. Your new parents love you; and I love you.

True, my dear, said Mrs. Levi to her amiable daughter; and where there is sincere affection, it will not issue in mere unavailing sympathy; much less in empty compliments.—My child, said she to me, I must request that you will not think too highly of the trifling presents which you have received, or may receive. It gives me pain to see you distressed, whatever be the cause. Believe me, Miss Neville, the pleasure we receive far exceeds the benefits we confer.

I took her hand, and that of her daughter, and, pressing them to my lips, watered them with my tears; but I was unable to speak.—Come, my child, said she, take courage. Your heavenly Father is able to provide for you; and I have no doubt but you will see better days than these; days in which you yourself will be happy in alleviating the distresses of others. But we must now begin to employ ourselves. Mr. Levi will set out for Brussels in two or three days, and will return in a fortnight; and by that time all the articles which you have lost may be replaced.

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I returned my benefactress the most sincere thanks. And as nothing more occurred yesterday of sufficient importance to be related, I shall here finish this second letter. I am, dear Madam,

Most sincerely yours,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXIV.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

MY most kind friends, Mrs. and Miss Levi, employ almost all their time at their needle, in helping me to replace the articles which I lost through the treachery of Dangerfield and his daughter. One thing which they took I exceedingly regret the loss of, our correspondence; which I had fairly transcribed. The originals, which I left at home, have probably before this time been burnt. I do not intend to send you these letters till I am fixed in some permanent situation, because I think it possible that my dear but mistaken parent may apply to you to know where I am. This ought at present to be kept a secret, lest fresh trials should be invited.

It gives me no small concern, that every thing which my friends have bought for me is too good for the sphere wherein I must now move. I said what I decently could to prevent it; but in vain did I try to keep their generosity from exceeding the bounds of moderation. Mrs. Levi and her daughter now go to the milliners without me; for Mrs. L. says, that the trouble which I give them is more than the expense of the articles.—In all this I desire to view the hand of providence. Our heavenly Parent raises up friends to aid us in our distress; and when we can do nothing, he does every thing.

Mr. Levi came home early in the evening. He says

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that the bastile is destroyed, and that M. de Launay, the governor of it, has been beheaded by the populace.

My dear friend, said Mr. Levi to me this morning, I have had a great deal of conversation concerning you with Mrs. Levi and my daughter. I fear that the present commotions in France are only a prelude to troubles more widely extended, in which other countries will be involved. There is a considerable revolutionary spirit in my own country. I intend to remove either to New-York or to New-England. We all wish to render you service; but this cannot easily be effected if we are separated. Accompany us, and partake of our good and evil. You have lost one parent: I will endeavour in some measure to supply his place. I have but this one child to provide for; and she already considers you as her sister.

Miss Levi arose and embraced me, which token of love and friendship I most cordially returned. My dear Eusebia, said she, you must accompany us. You are indeed my sister. I feel a growing affection for you; and we shall all rejoice to make you as happy as you make us.

It would give me great pleasure to accompany you, said I; but why, my dear friends, should I be an incumbrance to you? I can teach Italian, French, and Latin: this, I hope, with the divine blessing, will procure me a maintenance.

I doubt not but it might, answered Mr. Levi; and if you prefer it, we will prefer it also for your sake. As to your being an incumbrance, that objection is provided against. I have a nephew, an heir to an ample fortune, who is an orphan, and under my guardianship He is nine years of age. I wish to have him instructed in the Latin and English languages. And we shall be obliged to you if you will endeavour to improve your sister in the grammatical knowledge of English.

If I had had no inclination to take this voyage, I could scarcely have resisted these solicitations; especially when I perceived that I might be of some use in this worthy family. I therefore returned them my sincere thanks, and

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said that I would gladly accept the favour; at which they all, but especially my young friend, testified no small satisfaction.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours most sincerely,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXV.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

MR. LEVI returned from Brussels two days ago. To-morrow we are to leave this city, and to go to Dunkirk.

Yesterday we drank tea and supped at Mr. Asher's, when the following conversation took place between that gentleman and Mr. Levi.

Mr. Asher. I am not in the habit, Sir, of attacking Christians respecting their religion; for I think that every man should continue in the religion to which he was brought up. But I am really astonished, notwithstanding all you have said, that you should forsake a religion so well attested as ours, and become a follower of a man that was crucified.

Mr. Levi. You believe, Sir, the prophecies concerning the Messiah: what do you think he was or is to accomplish?

Mr. Asher. He will bestow great benefits on the world at large, but upon us in particular.

Mr. Levi. Temporal or spiritual?

Mr. Asher. I do not know.

Mr. Levi. Which blessings are greatest, and would most redound to the divine glory; national prosperity, or soul prosperity; the conquest of external enemies, or of internal depravity; riches in the present world, or pardon of sin and eternal life in that which is to come?

Mr. Asher. The blessings of eternity without doubt; for temporal blessings bear no proportion to them.

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Mr. Levi. And yet our nation are looking for a Messiah, who they suppose is to procure them temporal blessings.—Let me ask you again; how are we to account for the early institution of the worship of God by sacrifice? It seems to have been practised soon after the fall.

Mr. Asher. The guilt of the offender appears to have been transferred in a sort to the victim.

Mr. Levi. How then do you understand that passage in the fortieth psalm, *Burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required: then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God?*

Mr. Asher. It is a difficult passage. I know how Christians understand it.

Mr. Levi. They understand by it, that the sacrificing of the brute creation was, in its own nature, unable to take away sin; and that, therefore, it was to continue no longer than till a body should be prepared for the habitation of the Deity. They also think that the command given to Abraham to sacrifice that son from whom the Messiah was to spring, was not intended merely to try his faith and obedience, but to prefigure what God designed to do. *My son*, cried Abraham, *God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering*. Abraham intended this as an evasion; but we think that God intended it as a prophecy.

Mr. Asher. You cannot convert me to Christianity. I cannot so lightly abandon the religion of my ancestors.

Mr. Levi. I have not abandoned it. I glory in its truth. It is the foundation on which Christianity is built.—But to return: you grant that the pardon of sin is the greatest of all blessings.

Mr. Asher. There can be no happiness without it.

Mr. Levi. Ought not this favour to be conferred in such a way as to make all intelligent agents tremble at the thought of offending God?

Mr. Asher. There seems to be a propriety in this.

Mr. Levi. Are there not many intimations and predictions that the Messiah was to be a great sufferer, and that he was to suffer on account of sin?

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Mr. Asher. I grant it. To reconcile these passages with others which speak of him as victorious and triumphant, you know that some of our people have thought that there will be two Messiahs, the one a conqueror, the other a sufferer. At present my mind is in a state of suspense about it

Mr Levi. The same Messiah who was a sufferer, was also a conqueror.—But, my good Sir, since you acknowledge that our Scriptures predict a suffering Messiah, how can you prove that Jesus was not that suffering Messiah? Or why, when you know that I profess him to be the Messiah, do you mention his crucifixion as an objection?

Mr. Asher. Because I think it was blasphemous for a man who was crucified to call himself God. Jesus frequently asserted his divinity in language too obvious to be mistaken; and the writers of the New Testament assert it without disguise. Some Christians have endeavoured to recommend their religion to us by representing this doctrine as a modern invention: but this has no effect upon us; we know that it is explicitly and abundantly contained in the New Testament.

Mr. Levi. The New Testament, Sir, maintains the divine unity, at the same time that it declares that Christ was God.—But you have retreated from the position which you at first took. You no longer object to his being the Messiah because he was crucified. Your present ground of objection is, that you think he was a blasphemer.

Mr. Asher. You mistake if you think that I have relinquished my first ground of objection. I continue to object to a crucified Messiah; for of what use could his crucifixion be?

Mr. Levi. You may learn this by reading the prophet Isaiah, who informs us that the Messiah was to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; that the chastisement of our peace was to be upon him; that with his stripes we were to be healed; and that the iniquity of us all was to be laid upon this despised, yet glo-

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rious personage. His crucifixion, therefore, is a commentary on the sacrifices under the law; and he was the great sacrifice of which they were only types.—Permit me now to ask what you think is the first and great duty of rational creatures?

Mr. Asher. To love God. This includes love to his commandments, and consequently obedience to them; for where there is not obedience, there cannot be love.

Mr. Levi. Is it not probable that God, in pardoning his offending creatures, would do it in such a way, as would overwhelm transgressors with an awful view of the dire effects of sin, at the same time that it melted them, and inspired them with ardent love to himself, from a deep and heart-felt conviction, that he alone, against whom they had sinned, had been the author of their deliverance?

Mr. Asher. I think it is.

Mr. Levi. My intention is to show that Christianity, right reason, and divine revelation, are but three names for the same thing. I will, therefore, further ask, whether if the Saviour of sinners had been a mere creature, sin would have worn so terrible an aspect?

Mr. Asher. Your argument requires that God should suffer and die, which to me appears absurd.

Mr. Levi. You should rather have said, mysterious. Christians acknowledge that the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation are mysterious. The second person in the trinity having assumed our nature, the blood of Jesus is on that account called the blood of God. Not that we believe that, properly speaking, God can suffer: the divine and human natures, though united so as to form a divine person, continued distinct. What we mean is, that the value of the blood of Jesus, considered as the great atonement for sin prefigured by all the sacrifices under the law, arose from his being a divine person.

Mr. Asher. You talk of the second person in the trinity. Do not our Scriptures maintain that God is one?

Mr. Levi. Yes; one being. But still there is a plurality of persons. There is the Father, and there is the Son.

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Kiss the Son, said the psalmist; and, *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* Could this be said of any one but God?—Again; *The Lord said unto my Lord.* Who but God could be called David's Lord?

Mr. Asher. If the three divine persons are one being, wherein does their distinct personality consist?

Mr. Levi. It is but little that the most exalted creature can know of him to whom nothing can be compared. The unity of Jehovah, and the divinity of the Messiah and of the holy Spirit, are written as with a sun-beam. The safest way is, to content ourselves with the belief of these truths, without investigating the theory of them. Many who have inquired too curiously into this unsearchable doctrine, have suffered for their temerity.

Mr Asher. Then why speak of it at all?

Mr. Levi. So far as it is revealed, it is our duty to speak of it. The ancient navigators, before the invention of the compass, were afraid to venture out of sight of land. The Scriptures are the shore, along which our weak barks ought to coast.

Mr. Asher. Why did not Jesus from the beginning tell his disciples, in the clearest language, that he was Jehovah appearing visibly to men?

Mr Levi It was necessary that they should be led forward step by step. Such a full blaze of the truth as brake in upon them after his ascension, would at that early period have overpowered them, and would have destroyed all familiar converse with him.

Mr. Asher. Might not, however, the apostles in their writings have so explicitly declared that Jesus was Jehovah, that no person calling himself a Christian could have denied it?

Mr. Levi. It does not comport with the wisdom and righteousness of God to state the truth in so forcible a light, as that they who seek occasion to reject it shall not be able to succeed. *The meek he will guide in judgment: the meek he will teach his way:*—but *the scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not.* (Ps. xxv. 9. Prov. xiv. 6.) If

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things had been so stated as to preclude all objections, Jesus would not have been that which it was declared he should be, *a sign which should be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed* (Luke ii. 34, 35 ;) the predictions of false doctrines and heresies among the professors of Christianity, and of the antichristian apostasy, would not have been accomplished ; and the prophecy of Isaiah would not have been fulfilled, *Go, and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not ; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes ; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.* Chap. vi. 9, 10.

Mr. Asher. Does not the language of some Christians seem to countenance the opinion of there being a plurality of Gods ?

Mr. Levi. They do not believe in a plurality of Gods. It is possible, however, that there may sometimes be an impropriety in their language, in consequence of their attempting to define and explain a doctrine which can neither be explained nor comprehended.

Mr. Asher. Well ; you must go by your Scriptures, and we must go by ours.

Mr. Levi. I wish you, Sir, to make your Scriptures the rule of your faith ; but you do not do so. Their leading subjects, are, the person and work of the Messiah, the rejection of him by our nation, and the reception of him by the gentiles. They also predicted the destruction of our city, our dispersion through the world, and our continuing a long time without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice. *Afterward*, continues the prophet, *shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.* David our king, is He who now sits on the throne of David, and the throne of whose kingdom shall be established for ever.

Mr. Asher. For ever could only mean for a long time. More is said concerning the perpetuity of the law, than concerning the perpetuity of the kingdom of David.

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Mr. Levi. And they are both perpetual. It is true we have been many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice. Yet, notwithstanding these external observances have ceased, which were the shadow of good things to come, the law continues, and will continue to the end of time; for the Son of David is the King and the Prince of his people, whether Jews or gentiles; his sacrifice is a sacrifice of infinite dignity; and he is a high priest who hath an unchangeable priesthood.

I am, dear Madam,

Your sincere friend and servant,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXVI.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I AM now with Mr. Levi and his family at Amsterdam. The attention paid to me by my kind benefactors, is not in the least diminished; and my affection for them is not less than theirs for me.

Our road lay through Cassel. The mountain on which it is built being very steep, we walked up it; for it was with difficulty that the poor animals drew the coach. When we were near the summit, Mr. Levi picked up a petrified shell. My dear, said he to Mrs. Levi, what does this remind you of? The deluge, replied she.

That wonderful event, said Mr. Levi, is confirmed by the tradition of almost all nations. The truth of our sacred books is likewise corroborated in various other particulars by the ancient history of the heathen world. But what greater proof of their truth can be required than the present state of our own nation, dispersed all over the world, and observing annual festivals which have been celebrated ever since the time of the miraculous events which

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they commemorate? And if the Jewish Scriptures are true, the Christian Scriptures are true likewise: they must stand or fall together. The most important of our prophecies are unfulfilled, and will never be fulfilled, if Jesus of Nazareth was not the Messiah. O my dear, how thankful ought we to be to our heavenly Father, that he has made us the disciples of his beloved Son. Yes; the despised Jesus was the true Messiah.

I never, till I was a Christian, replied Mrs. Levi, saw that glory in our sacrifices which I now behold. They formerly appeared with a light, resembling the light of a glow-worm: they now resemble the sun in the firmament. The Christian Messiah is that despised, ill-treated, and rejected person, whose coming was predicted in the psalms, and the time of whose advent was foretold by Daniel. I cease to wonder at the sceptre's being departed from Judah; for Shiloh is come; and the promise to David is made good, that the government should continue in his family for ever.

I inquired at Cassel concerning M. de Bethune, a friend of my brother's, and found that he had embarked for America, with his wife and family, but a week before. Had I known this when I was at St. Omer's, I certainly should have fled to him for protection: but I have no reason to repine; for I could not have been treated more kindly than I now am.

As soon as the waiter at our inn at Dunkirk observed that I spoke English, Madam, cried he, a young gentleman was here yesterday, inquiring for an English lady, who, he said, had been shipwrecked about a month before on this coast. I told him, that I knew such an accident had happened about that time to a small sloop bound for London, and that several persons had been saved by a smuggling cutter, but that I did not know any thing about them.—Pray, said I, did you ask the name of the lady?—He replied, that he did not; but that, according to the gentleman's description of her, she was just such a person as myself.

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I should not have mentioned this trifling matter, had it not been for what follows. Having staid three days at Dunkirk, we went on board the Alcide, bound for Amsterdam, a small vessel with only two sailors and a boy, beside the captain. We had not been many minutes on board before the captain said to me, Pray, Madam, is not your name Neville? What is your reason, Sir, answered I, for inquiring after my name? I will tell you, Madam, replied he. A tall young gentleman came on board a few days ago, and inquired about a lady of that name. His description of her would very well correspond with yourself. I think he must be a lover, added he; for he described her as having no equal.

That is a pretty good description of this lady, said Mrs. Levi, especially if his estimate include the mind.

I blushed, and replied, If I am the person whom the gentleman wanted, he was certainly as partial to me, Madam, as you are. But pray, Sir, can you recollect any particular features in the gentleman's countenance?

Perfectly, cried M. de Luchereau; for I was as much taken with the expressiveness of his face, as I was with the manliness of his person. His hair and eyes were of a dark brown: the form of his nose inclined to the aqueline; and his complexion was florid.

This astonished me. Till I heard this I had no doubt of its being my brother: but my brother's eyes are blue, and his hair is of as light a brown as mine. The gentleman did not tell M. de Luchereau his name.

The wind being contrary, and the weather tempestuous, Miss Levi and I were very sea-sick. Great attention was paid to us by the kind Mrs. Levi, who had been many voyages, and was not at all affected. When we had landed, and were come to Mr. Levi's house, the parlour in which we sat appeared to me to rise and fall, and to have the same motion with the vessel: but after a night's sleep I felt myself perfectly recovered.

I am, dear Madam,

Most affectionately yours,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

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LETTER LXXVII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

YESTERDAY afternoon a Mr. Samuel, a relation of Mr. Levi, and about the same age, called to see him. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Levi was at home: but they were both expected to return to tea. Saying that he would stop till Mr. Levi's return, he was shown into the room where Miss Levi and I were sitting.

After a few minutes' silence he thus began, addressing himself to me, Well, Madam, I suppose you are one of those who worship that dead man.

Eus. If you mean to say, Sir, that Christians worship a dead man, I deny the charge. It rests with you therefore to prove it.

Mr. Sam. Your own Scriptures, Madam, declare that Jesus the carpenter died.

Eus. They do so. But I must beg leave to observe, that we worship him not as man but as God. And you will further notice, that although our Scriptures declare that he died, they also declare that he rose from the dead, which fact is as well confirmed as that Enoch was translated, or Elijah taken to heaven in a fiery chariot. It is indeed as well authenticated as any fact whatever which happened at that distance of time. Our Lord was seen and conversed with during forty days after his resurrection, not only by twelve pious men whom he chose to be witnesses of what he did and taught, but by more than five hundred persons at one time, the greater part of whom were appealed to by Paul, in his famous defence of the resurrection of the dead, as then living. The medium by which he proved the resurrection of the dead, was the resurrection of Jesus, that being a known and acknowledged fact.

Mr. Sam. I cannot believe his resurrection.

Eus. Then, Sir, you will be obliged to believe a thing

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far more incredible. You must believe that twelve poor men, who anxiously laboured to promote their own salvation and the salvation of others, and who have composed the most perfect system of ethicks that the world has ever seen, were a set of villains and impostors.

Mr. Sam. I do not believe this; but I believe that they were enthusiasts, and their master an impostor.

Eus. Can you then believe, that about a hundred and twenty persons were so far deceived by Jesus, as to be persuaded that he raised the dead, that he opened the eyes of the blind, and that he healed the leprosy, and many other diseases, although he did none of these things? Do you think, Sir, that the most understanding man in Amsterdam, would be able to persuade a considerable number of people, that they saw him raise the dead, heal the blind and deaf, and cause the lame to walk, unless he actually did so? The miracles of Jesus and of Moses bore no resemblance to legerdemain. Were the disciples of Jesus carried away by enthusiasm, when, at two different times, they and several thousand other persons were fed with a small quantity of food; when they supped with their friend Lazarus, after he had been buried four days; and when they beheld the resurrection of the widow of Nain's son, whom they accidentally met as he was carrying to interment? If these miracles were not performed, the disciples of Jesus were wicked deceivers. But that they were not deceivers, their writings prove. They overflow with love to God and men; and contain nothing inconsistent with what Moses and the prophets have written. The Jewish Scriptures are in unison with the Christian, and are the foundation on which the Christian Scriptures are built.

Mr. Sam. Where is it required in our Scriptures that a poor carpenter should be considered and treated as God?

Eus. We believe Jesus to be the Messiah. Now there are many predictions in your Scriptures that the Messiah was to be Jehovah residing among his creatures.

Mr Sam. Mention one of them.

Eus. Isaiah predicts the birth of a child, who was to

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sit on the throne of David for ever, and who was to be called *the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the prince of peace.* Zechariah predicts the death of the Messiah, and his equality with the Father, in the following language. *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts.* This exalted personage was to be ushered in by a herald, who was to cry in the wilderness, *Prepare ye the way of Jehovah, make straight in the desert a high way for our God.* Before him every valley was to be exalted, and every mountain and hill was to be made low. Jerusalem is commanded to *lift up her voice, and to say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*

Mr. Sam. Do these predictions, my young friend, prove that Jesus was the Messiah?

Eus. That is not what I was required to prove; but that according to the Jewish Scriptures, the Messiah was to be God. This they fully establish; and unless your ancestors could have disproved the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah, they ought not to have condemned him for blasphemy because he made himself equal with God. Neither, unless you can disprove that claim, ought you to accuse me of worshipping any other being than Jehovah, whom Moses and your fathers worshipped.

Mr. Sam. If Jesus was the Messiah, how came our fathers to reject him?

Eus. It was predicted that they would reject him. Isaiah, speaking of the Messiah, expressly declares that he should be despised and rejected of men; should be oppressed and afflicted; should be brought as a lamb to the slaughter; should be taken from prison and from judgment; and should be cut off out of the land of the living. If your fathers had not rejected him, his soul would not have been made an offering for sin; nor would he have been the

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great atoning sacrifice prefigured by the paschal lamb, by the sacrifices under the law, and probably by the command given to Abraham to sacrifice his son. The psalmist, in prophesying of the death of the Messiah, mentions the piercing of his hands and his feet; the dividing of his garments, and the casting of lots on his vesture; and the reproachful language with which he should be addressed in the hour of death. It is also worthy of being remarked, that he was slain at the time of the passover, a circumstance, which could not be of his own contriving.—I do not say that it is impossible for prejudiced persons to misinterpret these prophecies. If that obscurity had not attended them which always attends prophecy, your ancestors would not have fulfilled them by putting the Messiah to death.

Before this conversation terminated, Mrs. Levi returned; and Mr. Levi shortly afterward. After tea, Mr. Levi and Mr. Samuel had a conversation which I will relate in my next letter.

I am, very affectionately,
Dear Madam,
Your sincere friend,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXVIII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

AFTER having settled some commercial matters, Mr. Samuel said to Mr. Levi, This young lady and I have had a long debate about the truth of Christianity; and I assure you she has acquitted herself very well. But, my friend, as we both worship the one Jehovah, what great difference can here be between your religion and ours?

Mr. Levi. There is not an article of the Christian faith which is not contained in the religion of our fathers. The

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prophecies respecting the Messiah have been fulfilled in Jesus. In rejecting Jesus, therefore, you reject the promised Messiah.

Mr. Sam. But if we do it ignorantly, shall we not be pardoned, if we worship Jehovah, and endeavour to obey his precepts?

Mr. Levi. This, at best, is doubtful. Moses, prophesying of the Messiah, told our fathers, that God would raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto him; and that if any one should refuse to hearken to him, God would require it of him. Besides, how can you be said to worship Jehovah, and to endeavour to obey his precepts, while, by your rejection of Jesus, you are saying concerning the Lord and his anointed, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us?

Mr. Sam. If we cannot believe that Jesus is the Messiah, how can we help it? Will God condemn us for disbelieving what we cannot believe?

Mr. Levi. The reason you cannot believe is on account of your prejudice. You either do not read the New Testament, or, if you do read it, yet, being convinced beforehand of its falsehood, you read it with a determination to find fault. When you read it, you ought to pray for the divine assistance.

Mr. Sam. I am astonished that you should become a Christian. Do not the Christians maintain that there are three Gods?

Mr. Levi. Jesus invariably maintained the divine unity. The writers of the New Testament do the same, at the same time that they plead for the divinity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Mr. Sam. Do our Scriptures say any thing about the Trinity?

Mr. Levi. They frequently glance at it. God said at the creation, *Let us make man in our image;* at the confusion of tongues, *Let us go down and confound their language:* and in Isaiah's vision, *Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* He exhorts the kings and judges of the

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earth to *kiss the Son.* To the Messiah he said, *Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee:* and concerning him, *I will make him my first born, higher than the kings of the earth.*—As to the Spirit of God, he is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament.

Mr. Sam. Christians talk of God's sending his Son into the world. How can God send his Son, if the Son himself is God? This is a difficulty with which our Scriptures are not embarrassed.

Mr. Levi. Have you never read what the prophet Zechariah says? *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the* LORD: *And many nations shall be joined to the* LORD *in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the* LORD *of hosts hath sent me unto thee.* It appears from this prophecy, that the Messiah was to dwell in Judea; that this glorious personage was to be Jehovah; that he was to be sent by Jehovah; and that the nations were to be joined, or converted to him.

Mr. Sam. What kind of personality do you suppose the personality of the Trinity to be? Some Christians talk of modal personality, and some of real. What is your opinion?

Mr. Levi. I do not know that either the Jewish or the Christian Scriptures answer this question; and where they are silent, I think it my duty to be silent too. I believe that the Father is God, that the Son is God, and that the holy Spirit is God; and yet that there are not three divine Beings, but only one divine Being. As far as this, the Scripture goes; but here it ceases. To inquire further, and to endeavour to find out the unrevealed mysteries of the divine nature, argues a presumptuous and vain curiosity, and cannot but offend that great Being, who would not permit our ancestors to draw near and gaze when he descended upon Mount Sinai.

Mr. Sam. What good has your religion done to mankind? Have not Christians, by their persecutions, destroyed more of the human race than have been destroyed by the plague?

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Mr. Levi. If I were to tell you, Sir, of the crimes of some of our countrymen, you would reply, that Judaism is not chargeable with the crimes of its professors. Permit me to make a similar reply in defence of Christianity. The spirit inculcated in the New Testament, is not a spirit of persecution, but of love to both the bodies and souls of men. When Christianity is perverted, and rendered an engine of the state, it ceases to be the religion of Jesus Christ. Christians are not answerable for the blood which has been shed by men bearing the Christian name. The Christianity which I have embraced is the Christianity of the New Testament. I do not think myself bound, nor have I an inclination, to defend any other. What does the New Testament, therefore, say upon this subject? Where do Christ and his apostles teach us to injure one another? Is there any thing conducive to the glory of God, and to the good of mankind, which they have not taught, both by their precepts and by their example? Whether it be true or false, Christianity is a religion which is safe; and it is worthy of God whether he be the author of it or not. Where are the perfections of the Deity placed in a more amiable light than in the New Testament, or where do you find a more divine morality? We are not merely taught by it to love God: but, if we cordially receive its doctrines, we shall be irresistibly induced to love him. The great difference between the Old Testament and the New is this. In the former, many important blessings are promised; in the latter, they are declared to have been conferred. If the Christian religion be true, (which I cannot doubt,) and if I embrace it in reality as well as by profession, I become a partaker of those blessings.

Mr. Sam. Why did not Jesus give our fathers such a proof of his being the Messiah as would have overcome their incredulity?

Mr. Levi. What greater evidence can you require than the miracles which Jesus and his apostles wrought. Was it not enough for the dead to be raised, for the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk? But these mira-

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cles produced no better effect upon our ancestors, than the miracles of Moses did upon Pharaoh. The truth is, that both the one and the other possessed an obduracy and enmity of heart which it was not in the power of miracles to remove. They hated the light, and would not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved. Read the 22d psalm: you will there see the enmity of our ancestors against the Messiah predicted.

Mr. Sam. If they did what was predicted, where lay their crime?

Mr. Levi. This objection will not be esteemed valid at the bar of God. The revealed will of God, and not his secret purposes, ought to be the rule of our actions.

Mr. Sam. Can an inspired book contain such errors and contradictions, and things so incredible, as are to be found in the gospels?

Mr. Levi. If by errors you mean the errors of transcribers, they are not to be placed to the account of the inspired writers, and they are so unimportant as not in the least to affect the truth of any doctrine or of any fact, contained in the sacred volume. As to incredibility, what is there in the New Testament more incredible than in the Old? Or what is there in either beyond the power of God to effect? *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?*—It is not to be wondered at that in the book of divine revelation there should be obscurities, and even seeming contradictions, the former of which cannot now be elucidated, nor the latter reconciled, owing to the length of time which has elapsed since the various parts of it were written; nor that there should be doctrines in it beyond the reach of our limited understanding.—But were the difficulties in the Old Testament and in the New more numerous and important than they are, do you find nothing, Sir, in the books of nature and of providence, which has a tendency to try your faith? May not an atheist tell you of rocks in the sea, hurtful instead of being useful, and bearing no marks of wise contrivance; of lions, also, and tigers; and of toads, ser-

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pents, and noxious insects? And may he not mention many instances in which the wicked have prospered, and the righteous have suffered adversity? Yet you do not on these accounts disbelieve a superintending providence, or the manifestation of the divine wisdom in the works of creation. In arguing with such a person you would say, that a few objections, and those doubtful, and relating to things of which we have an imperfect knowledge, ought not to be opposed to the wisdom of God in his works, visible in numberless instances, and to the universal experience and historical testimony of his kind providence. Now what I wish is, that you would only view the Old and New Testaments with the same candour. I mention the Old Testament as well as the New: for the one has its difficulties as well as the other. I do not say this to disparage the sacred volume handed down to us by our ancestors. It deserves my reverence and my love. I receive it as the word of God. Let all that has been written concerning the rabble of heathen deities be compared with the 108d and 104th psalms, or with many other parts of the Jewish Scriptures. As well might you compare the grossest darkness with the bright beams of yonder luminary. That luminary, however, has its spots; the works of creation have their seeming defects: providence has its mysteries which we cannot unfold; and the Jewish Scriptures have their difficulties. Is it any wonder then that the Christian Scriptures should not be without theirs?

Mr. Sam. What is your opinion, Mr. Levi, concerning divine inspiration?

Mr. Levi. I believe, Sir, that every good man is under the influence of the Spirit of God. This is more the case at some times than at others, because there is frequently an extraordinary necessity for the divine interposition to comfort, to direct, to guide into necessary truth, and to recover from dangerous error. But the inspiration of the sacred writers was of a different kind. Their writings are public fountains, in which all necessary truth is preserved, that the world may drink of their salubrious waters.

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Mr. Sam. Jesus promised to bring all things to the remembrance of his disciples. Did the Spirit of God dictate every word and phrase in which they composed the history of their master?

Mr. Levi. Not in such a way as to set aside the exercise of their thinking powers, or the peculiarities of their style.

Mr. Sam. You believe that they were preserved from flagrant errors?

Mr. Levi. I certainly do.

Mr. Sam. Then tell me ingenuously what you think of the two first chapters of Matthew. Do not the guidance of the wise men by a star, and Herod's command that the young children at Bethlehem should be slain, appear like legendary tales? If Josephus had heard of these things, would he not have related them? Besides, you are a better philosopher than not to know the impossibility of a person's being directed to a house by the appearance of a star over it.

Mr. Levi. When God is about to perform wonderful things, he often uses extraordinary methods for the accomplishment of his purpose. Witness the wonders performed in the land of Egypt, which, I doubt not, are ranked by unbelievers with legendary tales, notwithstanding there were many hundred thousand spectators. In the two chapters you speak of, nothing unworthy of God is recorded. The Messiah was to be the Saviour of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews. Why then should the early exhibition of him to the Gentiles excite our astonishment? The star I suppose to have been an appearance at no very great height in the atmosphere: the same word is used by Greek writers to express what we call a shooting star. Now if some such meteor was seen by the Magi, was it impossible for God to inform them of its import?—As to the murder of the young children, I grant that Josephus might be acquainted with it, as well as with Herod's other cruelties. But it is very unsafe to infer from the silence of any author, that a fact recorded by another cannot be true.

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The facts related by every historian are very far from being all that occurred in the times of which he writes. Many things are related by every historian which are omitted by cotemporary writers. The fact in question is omitted by three out of four of the evangelists. Add to this, Josephus, like the rest of his countrymen, was prejudiced against Jesus; and therefore it is not surprising if he should have carefully avoided the recording of those things which related to him. If the paragraph in his history which relates to him be authentic, yet it is extremely imperfect, and avoids entering into particulars; and if it be spurious, which is very probable, it will follow, that, notwithstanding the notoriety of the life and death of Jesus, he has preserved a determined and stubborn silence concerning him, either from hatred to the Christians, whom he would not deign to mention, or rather perhaps out of regard to Vespasian, whom he had flattered by calling him the Messiah.

Mr. Sam. How can such an ignorant application of prophecy be accounted for, as is to be found in those chapters? In Hosea, where it is said, "I called my son out of Egypt," a past event is referred to, and not a future one predicted.

Mr. Levi. I grant that those words refer to the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. But our sacred books contain prophetic histories, as well as express predictions. And although the connexion between those histories and the future events to which they referred may not have been always pointed out by the holy Spirit, as it has been in this instance, and in the lamentation of the mothers for their children at the time of the Babylonish captivity, yet there is such a striking resemblance between many of them and the history of Jesus, that I cannot but think that this resemblance was intended to be one among the numerous proofs of his divine mission. In the history of Joseph, in particular, Rollin has pointed out this resemblance in a great number of instances.

Mr. Sam. Why was the resurrection of Lazarus men-

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tioned only by John? The three other historians could not forget so wonderful a fact.

Mr. Levi. As they wrote their histories many years before John wrote his, it is probable that Lazarus was then alive, and that the relation of it by them might have exposed him to the malice of the Jews.

After Mr. Samuel was gone, many remarks were made by Mrs. Levi and myself on the different things which had been said during the conversation. Miss Levi also asked many questions, as she frequently does, very much to the purpose. My love for this amiable young lady daily increases. She copies after her excellent mother, who is a model of affability, and of Christian politeness. What an asylum my good God has provided for me! The kindness of my dear friends to me is inexpressible. Their partiality toward me is so great, that they are pleased with every thing I say, and with every thing I do. Much of my time is occupied in instructing my pupils, and in needle-work. I scarcely ever go from home; so that were I to attempt to describe the city wherein I reside, its inhabitants, and the surrounding country, it would be doing that imperfectly which has been already well done by others.

I am, dear Madam,
With sincere respect,
Affectionately yours,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXIX.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

WE arrived at New-York on Friday last. We had a long passage, in consequence of contrary winds; and our water was very indifferent as well as short.

I suppose that before this time you have heard from me. We met the Friendship, bound for London, from which

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our captain procured a cask of water. I embraced the opportunity of writing a short letter, just to let you know that I was well.

A very extraordinary occurrence has happened since our arrival. As I was walking with my two pupils on the wharf, and enjoying the sight of Long-Island, of the sea, and of the shipping, which form a delightful view, a gentleman, looking at me very steadfastly, said, Madam, if my eyes do not deceive me, I know your name. You can be no other than the sister of Mr. William Neville, a young gentleman that I was acquainted with in France, and whom I loved like one of my own children.—Sir, replied I, is not your name de Bethune?—Indeed it is, answered he. My acquaintance with your brother commenced at Cassel. I wrote to him at St. Omer's, but have received no answer. Pray what has brought you to this part of the world? Your father and brother, I suppose, are with you.

Here I related what had befallen me, from the time that my father discovered me to be a protestant to the present period. M. de Bethune was affected at the narration. He said that business had brought him to New-York, but that he and his family resided near New-London, in Connecticut; that if it were in my power to accompany him thither, his house and his purse should be at my service; and that I should find a family who knew how to value the sister of Mr. William Neville. I returned him my sincere thanks. Miss Levi and I invited him to accompany us to our lodgings. Mr. and Mrs. Levi received him in the kindest manner, and intreated him to dine with them, to which he readily consented.

It gives me great pleasure, my dear Sir, said M. de Bethune to Mr. Levi, to learn from Miss Neville, that you are one of the spiritual descendants of your great ancestor, and that you have embraced the religion of that Messiah, whose day he saw afar off, and rejoiced, and was glad.

It is my unspeakable mercy, answered Mr. Levi; and I desire to bless God on this account.

After some conversation about America, M. de Bethune

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said, You are come, Sir, to a country, where men of different religions live in greater harmony than perhaps in any other. The reason is, that no one is established by law as the favourite of the state; and that no person is deprived of any civil right on account of his religious sentiments.

Mr. Levi. This, Sir, is right. Persecution cannot produce a change of sentiments. Besides, the prejudices, connexions, and capacities of men, their means of information, and their modes of expressing themselves, are so various, that uniformity of sentiment is not to be expected.

M. de Bethune. No greater injury can be sustained by a sect of Christians, than to be more highly favoured by the state than their brethren. This undue preference gives birth to pride and arrogance. Conformity to the divine image is not so much sought after, as a continuance of the partiality of government in their favour. Avarice, and all the selfish passions, have full scope. However pure the sect might be before it was connected with the state, this union must render it corrupt; for in all struggles for wealth and power, the worst men generally gain the ascendency. The humble minister of Jesus Christ will prefer poverty and a good conscience to flattering the vices of the great, and other nefarious arts, by which ecclesiastical preferment is too frequently acquired. By this unnatural coalition, also, the malignant passions have been begotten and cherished. By it the lamb has been transformed into the lion; and the most pure and benevolent religion that ever blessed mankind, has been made an instrument of avarice and oppression. Those Christians who had no other pretensions to the divine favour, than because they were favoured by the state, have shed the blood of millions; and although providence has diminished their power, they are still very unfriendly to dissenters. In the United States it is very different. The general and equal protection afforded to all, tends to cut up envy, and to unite them together as far as the nature of things will admit.

Mr. Levi. An antichristian spirit began to display itself in the apostolic days. Diotrephes opposed Christ under

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the Christian name. To thirst after pre-eminence in the Christian church, is to oppose the Messiah, and to undermine his authority. Antichrist was to sit in the temple of God, and to claim divine honour. He was to be supported by the kings of the earth, was to traffic in the souls of men, and was to murder the servants of Jesus. These things are contrary to the spirit of the gospel. This is the portrait of national churches, as appears from the united testimony of history and experience, compared with the predictions of the New Testament. Our nation complains, and justly, of the persecutions which they have suffered; but their persecutors were either merely nominal Christians, or their minds were perverted by their connexions. The despised followers of Jesus have been persecuted, as well as they, by antichristian societies armed with the power of the magistrate. Justice, however, obliges me to acknowledge, that there are many persons, both ministers and private Christians, in religious establishments, who would be an honour to any church.

M. de Bethune. Very true, Sir; and in their present situation we must let them continue, until God in his providence shall show them, what an essential difference there is between a society engaged in an unlawful connexion with the kings of the earth, and congregations gathered out of the world by the Spirit and word of God, and united together for the purposes of hearing the Scriptures illustrated and enforced, of observing the institutions of Christ, and of reproving, comforting, and watching over each other. The former maintains the authority of the magistrate in religious matters: the latter regulate their faith and practice by the word of God, and in spiritual concerns submit to no one but the great head of the church.

M. de Bethune invited us all to reside with him the whole summer at his farm near New-London. This invitation I believe we shall accept, as Mrs. Levi and her daughter, as well as myself, wish to see more of the country. Mr. Levi will not have it in his power to accompany

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us; but will be employed in looking out for an eligible situation.

I intend to send all these letters bound up in one parcel, by the first vessel that shall sail for London. I beg the favour of your sending, as soon as you receive them, a letter by the packet, directed for me, at Mr. Thomas Paterson's, Wall-street, New-York. Mr. Levi has temporary apartments at his house, till he determines where to settle.

I need not add, that I wish to receive all the information you can give me concerning yourself, your niece, and my family. I am, dear Madam,

Your faithful friend and servant,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXX.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

IN my last letter I informed you that M. de Bethune, the friend of my dear brother, had invited Mr. Levi, his family, and myself, to visit him at his farm, which is about seven miles from New-London. Mr. Levi could not accompany us; but he wished us to accept the invitation.

Mr. Bethune, (for so that gentleman calls himself in this country,) was to return in three days. At his earnest request, we accompanied him in a carriage provided for the purpose. The country through which we passed was fruitful, but not in so high a state of cultivation as France or England. The price and rent of land are so low, that the farmers will not take the trouble to make it produce the most it possibly can; but they occupy a great deal of land, and cultivate it badly. Compared, therefore, with the English, they may be called negligent farmers. This is not, however, universally the case.

In two days we arrived at Mr. Bethune's. His house is

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large and convenient, but plain and unadorned. Mrs. Bethune is a wife worthy of such a husband. When we entered this happy dwelling, he said, My love, I have brought you three visitors, whom I recommend to your notice as the friends of Jesus Christ.—Your friends, my dear, answered she, cannot be unwelcome guests.—But you must tell me who this lady is, continued Mr. Bethune, (pointing to me:) you have never seen her before; but you knew and esteemed her brother.—She immediately embraced me, and said, I am most happy in seeing the sister of Mr. William Neville.—I told this good lady that my name was indeed Neville, and that I had no doubt but that ours would be a growing friendship: to which she kindly assented.—Mr. Bethune briefly related the principal events of my history down to my acquaintance with the family of Mr. Levi. She heard the narration with tears of joy. It had the same effect on a son, about ten years of age, and on two daughters, one about eleven, and the other about fourteen. These, with a son who is married, and settled in Kentucky, are the whole of the family.

The attention paid to Mrs. and Miss Levi was the most polite and respectful.

After a slight supper, family worship was performed with great solemnity. One of the young people read a chapter out of the prophets; another a psalm; and the third a chapter out of the New Testament. Mr. Bethune concluded with prayer.

We then retired to our apartments. My room is neat and comfortable. I awoke early in the morning, and was dressed by five o'clock, being desirous of beholding the beauties of nature, the sight of which always affords me the most exquisite pleasure.

Though it was so early, I found Mrs. Bethune and her maids in the dairy, whither many large and well-filled pails were bringing to be converted into butter and cheese, of which articles a great quantity is made in the states of Connecticut and Rhode-Island. Mrs. Bethune took me into her orchard, and her kitchen-garden. In the former I

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saw abundance of fruit-trees. Such as are raised in England against the wall, with much care and attention, are standards here, and bear plenty of excellent fruit.

We then went to see the cows, (a great number of which had been brought to be milked,) and the other inhabitants of the farm-yard. The sight of the turkeys, geese, ducks and hens, gave me much pleasure.—These are honest people, Madam, said I: I love their company, and am happy in their friendship, which is never insincere. —A drawing-room, replied this good lady, would suffer exceedingly in the eyes of a wise man, if the sincerity of those who compose it were to be measured by that of my honest domestics.

I would not detain Mrs. Bethune any longer from her family concerns, but told her that I was going to write to London. A servant is come to inform me that breakfast is ready.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours very respectfully,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXXI.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

WHEN we left New-York, Mr. Paterson, who has great acquaintance among masters of ships, promised, that if a vessel should sail for London before my return, he would give me information in time.

I have received from him the pleasing information that the Mentor is to sail for London in ten days. Mr. Paterson assures me, that I may depend on the captain's care of whatever he may be entrusted with. I have told Mr. Bethune, that if he has any letter to send to England, I can enclose it. He replied, that he should certainly embrace the opportunity of writing to my brother. I intend to enclose the letter with mine, and to leave it to you to di-

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rect it. My beloved brother and my dear Miss Barnwell, will consider what I have written to you as intended equally for them. I would not, on any account, have my honoured parent or my sister, see these letters, as I fear they would only increase their indignation, and together with it their guilt.

I feel no resentment against those who have injured me, but daily pray for them. Perhaps my dear parent may have forgotten what he terms my heresy and disobedience, and may now be mourning too intensely for my loss; especially when he reflects how active a part he took against me. But I hope that my short letter, written on shipboard, reached you, and that he by this time knows that I am alive, and able to provide for myself. This was all which it was proper for me to say, till I was out of the reach of force, or even of persuasion.

This country delights me more and more. The clearness of the sky, the serenity of the weather, the beauty of all the natural objects around me, the great abundance of the necessaries of life, and the comfortable situation of the industrious poor, exhilarate my spirits.

Mrs. Bethune, who is a native of America, prefers it to Europe. As we were walking in the kitchen garden, I asked her a variety of questions about the country, and have received from her a great deal of information.

It astonishes me, Madam, said I, that such friends of liberty as the Americans are, should tolerate slavery.

Where the love of liberty, answered Mrs. Bethune, flows from self-love, they who are the most strenuous for their own liberty are the most careless about that of others. But the true friend of liberty cannot but detest slavery. It is painful to him even to behold that oppression which it is not in his power to alleviate.

This morning, after prayer, Mrs. Levi said to Mr. Bethune, As you were born in France, a place overrun with superstition and infidelity, pray, Sir, how came you to embrace sentiments so different from those which prevail in catholic countries?

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I must reserve Mr. Bethune's answer for my concluding letter, and sincerely subscribe myself,

Dear Madam,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXXII.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

MR. BETHUNE replied as follows:

"My father was a descendant from a younger branch of the family of the duke of Sully. Having lost my parents at the age of twenty, I sold a small paternal estate in the neighbourhood of Cassel, and determined to seek my fortune in America. My forefathers, notwithstanding much persecution, having adhered to the faith of their ancestors, I also retained the name of a protestant, but without any real religion. Having long determined to leave my native country, I had prepared for it by making myself master of the English language, in the course of which I read many English books, written by persons calling themselves Unitarians. These greatly delighted me; and I became a convert to their sentiments.

"Having deposited my property in the hands of a banker, I embarked for Quebec, and after a passage of seven weeks, landed in a country, where the works of God are sublime and magnificent; where there are forests the bounds of which have never been traced, and rivers that have the appearance of seas. I did not dislike Canada; yet, having an inclination to live under the English government, I went, in the middle of summer, with several companions, to New-York. I found the country more pleasant and fruitful, the further I advanced toward the south. The situation of New-York pleased me very much. It is, I believe, as well situated for water carriage as any

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place in the world. That city, however, was not appointed by him who settles the bounds of our habitation, to be the place of my residence.

"I was now determined to visit Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire; and I believe I should have done so, had I not been arrested in the way by this lady, (pointing to Mrs. Bethune.)

"In my road from New-York to Boston, I stopped a few days at New-London, which is about seven miles from this place. On such occasions it was my custom to make excursions into the adjacent country, a place to settle in being kept constantly in view. Being obliged by the scantiness of my patrimony to practise economy, I travelled on foot, and had been walking some hours, and viewing the little townships which are scattered over this delightful country, when, having lost my way, I wandered a considerable time without seeing a house, or any person from whom I could gain information. I followed the path I was in, till I arrived at a hamlet consisting of a few scattered houses. Stopping at one which had the best appearance, a gentleman came to the door about sixty years of age, tall, and rather thin, but with a most amiable countenance. As soon as he knew my situation, he desired me to walk in. It is very improper, Sir, said he, that you, who are a stranger, should attempt, at the close of the day, to find a road which at best is but intricate. I accepted his friendly invitation to stay all night in his humble dwelling, as he pleased to call the comfortable and roomy house wherein I now reside. After taking some refreshment, I sat down with him and this lady, (looking at Mrs. Bethune,) and briefly narrated my history, and that of my family, to the time of my calling at his friendly mansion, and also mentioned my intention of purchasing an estate when I had found one to my mind. He told me in return that his name was Woodbridge, and that his grandfather had left England in the reign of Charles the second, that he might enjoy the liberty of worshipping God in the wilderness of America, as this country might then be properly

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called; that many branches of his family resided in different parts of the continent; that the providence of God had preserved him in the place where he then lived, almost forty years; that he had been enabled to settle four sons on estates which he had bought for them; and that having lost his wife, he and his daughter, the only child he had, unmarried, resided together.—But, my friend, said he, you will pardon me if I observe to you, that notwithstanding your family were protestants, yet, in relating the many difficulties which you have encountered, and the deliverances you have met with, you have not once ascribed any of the mercies which you have received to that divine providence which guards us on every side.

"Conscious of the justice of this kind rebuke, I blushed, and had no power to speak.

"Sir, continued he, I do not wish to offend you: but, as you are young, and have no tender parent to counsel you, it is my desire to supply the place of such a friend.

"I began to take courage, and ingenuously confessed, that my thoughts had hitherto been too little employed about religion, but said that I would thankfully attend to any thing which he might advance on the subject, being convinced that he could have no other object in view than my good.

"Young gentleman, replied he, I thank you: it would indeed highly gratify me to render you service.—You are conscious, continued he, of your existence. You know that you are a rational creature, and that you are far exalted, in the scale of being, above the elements and animals which surround you. You find yourself in possession of an ability to contemplate, measure, examine, and compare the natures and properties of almost every thing which you behold. Now it is evident, that all these excellent properties did not meet in one creature by chance, but that they flow from admirable wisdom, contrivance, and design; and it is equally evident, that He who conferred on one part of the creation these peculiar excellences, intended that some valuable purpose should be answered by them. We were not sent into the

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world merely to eat, to drink, and to sleep. He who has given us a power of regarding his works with pleasure, and his providential care with gratitude, has undoubtedly intended us to be his humble companions, when we shall have learned to think properly of him and of ourselves. In the present state, the human race resemble a magnificent structure in ruins. If we are wise, we are also foolish; if we are strong, we are also weak. But our moral imperfections are much greater than our natural. Selfishness is, by nature, the spring of all our actions. It does not merely show itself in pride, vanity, self-dependence, covetousness, envy, hatred, murder, and all those vices which are odious in the sight of men, but can also assume the appearance of humility, candour, self abasement, liberality, contentment, love, and universal beneficence.

"And pray, Sir, said I, what would the world be without these virtues?

"Without them, replied he, or without the appearance of them, it would resemble a desert filled with beasts of prey. From whatever motive actions flow which conduce to the happiness of mankind, they who perform them deserve the gratitude and esteem of society. But those whom the Parent of the universe honours with his friendship here, and will reward with endless felicity hereafter, are influenced by a nobler motive than what I have mentioned. Not that I think it either possible or desirable to devest ourselves of self-love: it rather is to be wished, that that passion should be in subordination to a more exalted principle. This principle they only possess, who are so wise as to make this book (taking up a bible) their bosom friend. It is with propriety called the word of God. Here he speaks to the children of men. Here the original and the present state of man are displayed, and the divine character is revealed. If, Sir, you know yourself, you must have acquired your knowledge from this book: nor is there any true knowledge of God but what is drawn from the same fountain. And unless you are by some means brought to think nearly in the same manner with the divine Being, you will never dwell in his presence.

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"I was struck with the solemn manner in which he spoke these words. My dear Sir, exclaimed I, what would you advise me to do?

"Take this book, replied he. Esteem and keep it for my sake; but much more for your own; and most of all from a regard to him who has put such an invaluable treasure into the hands of his creatures. Read it, and meditate on it, every day of your life. It will afford you matter for prayer and praise in your closet. If you value it as you ought, it will make you thankful for your existence; it will make you a blessing to your family, and to the world; it will be an antidote against the fascinating smiles of prosperity, and the stings of adversity; it will give you true felicity, by causing you to love the Author of your being: and it will make you consider death as your friend, by giving you a pleasing view beyond the grave.

"These things, and many others which this good man said, had a wonderful effect on my mind; and a sense of the love of God in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ, made an abiding impression on my heart.

"In a few days I departed with considerable regret. Having visited Boston, and many of the principal towns in Massachusetts, I returned. When Mr. Woodbridge was satisfied that his good instructions had not been without effect, he consented to present me with this lady, for which favour I had before solicited him in vain. When we had lived together happily about thirty years, my family who had heard me talk a great deal about France, became anxious to see the place of my nativity; and, as almost every person has a desire to revisit the haunts of his childhood and youth, I did not oppose their inclination. We went by the way of London to Dunkirk, and after seeing many parts of France, took up our residence at Cassel, where I was born, and where I had the happiness to meet with your brother. But the alarming state of public affairs made us anxious to return to this country. A worthy friend of mine, who lives about two miles distant, bought my estate when I went to France, and was so kind, when I returned, as to let me have it again for the price that he gave me for it."

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Thus ended Mr. Bethune's narrative, which afforded us great pleasure.

I must now hasten to a close.—I am continually thinking of my friends in England. I long to see my dear brother, and my highly valued friend Miss Barnwell. My dear Mrs. Worthington, too, dwells much on my mind, as well as Thomas and Mary Livingstone.

I am, with the greatest regard,
Dear Madam,
Yours most sincerely,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

P. S. If three months should elapse before I hear from England, I shall begin to be impatient.

LETTER LXXXIII.

From Mr. Bethune to Mr. William Neville.

MY DEAR SON,

FOR what appellation can be more proper for a friend whom Mrs. Bethune and myself love with parental tenderness, and whom my children love as a brother? It afforded me equal pleasure and surprise to see your dear sister in America. She is now at my house, as you will learn by her letters to Mrs. Worthington. She is frequently much concerned on your account: but when she reflects how wonderfully she has been delivered, she trusts that God will also deliver you. She often wishes that you, and her friend Miss Barnwell, and the worthy Thomas Livingstone and his wife, were in this country.

When you were with us in France, I could perceive that you had a great inclination to accompany us. But I did not encourage it. I remembered that I was a parent: how then could I desire you to leave your family? I could not think of acting so unjust a part. If your parent shall have renounced you on account of your religion, in me and

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Mrs. Bethune you will find another father and mother, and in my children, brothers and sisters. I do not say that we will love you, but that we do love you, with a love which I trust will never end. In this world the love of the redeemed does but commence, and it meets with many stormy blasts to stop its growth: but on the other side of the everlasting hills an eternal spring abides, and the love of God and of each other will be ever growing, ever strengthening, ever improving.

You have repeatedly told me how excellent a parent, and how worthy a man your father is. His being your father gives him a claim to your love and obedience; and his being such a father entitles him to your most affectionate love and obedience. If your leaving him would give him any pain, by no means do it. My invitation, which I need not assure you is most sincere, goes only on the supposition that, on account of your religious sentiments, your father may be able to part with you without regret. *In* that case come over to us, and bring Thomas Livingstone and his wife with you, if you can do so.

I can add no more, but that your mother, and brother, and sisters, are well. Francis has settled in Kentucky, about thirty miles below Louisville. I do not know what would give us greater pleasure than to hear that Mr. William Neville had landed at New-York.

I am, my dear son,
Your affectionate father,
FRANCIS BETHUNE.

LETTER LXXXIV.

From Signior Albino to Mr. James Neville.

DEAR SIR,

As you and your family were in London, and we had no one to conduct divine worship in your chapel, Thomas Li-

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vingstone and I went yesterday to Barnwell to hear Mr. Lowe. We had scarcely left Thornton, when Mr. Henry Clifford came to the Abbey to inquire when you were expected to return. Being informed whither we were gone, he followed and soon overtook us. Thomas seemed for the first time ashamed of his ass, and said, that if he had expected to have Mr. Clifford's company, he would have ridden upon one of his master's horses.—If you think, Thomas, replied Mr. Clifford, that I esteem your company a dishonour to me, on account of your riding on an ass, I assure you that you are mistaken. However, it seems a little out of character, if we consult the etiquette of the world, for Mr. Neville's major-domo to ride on so unfashionable an animal. I wish mankind would learn to despise those things only which are in their own nature dishonourable.

As we were passing by Mr. Barnwell's house, he and his lady stood at the gate of the court-yard.—Mr. Clifford, cried Mrs. Barnwell, is the age of chivalry returned? I see you have got your squire.

We are going, Madam, answered Mr. Clifford, to hear Mr. Lowe.

Astonishing! cried Mrs. Barnwell. He is an illiterate fellow; and when such commence preachers, they hold themselves up to contempt.

It is no new thing, replied Mr. Clifford, for the servants of God to meet with contempt. The poor fishermen of Galilee held themselves up to contempt, and they were treated as you have treated your neighbour.

Come, come, friend Clifford, cried Mr. Barnwell, get off your horse and go to church; we shall have service in the afternoon. Of all the people in the world, I never thought that you would have gone mad. However, I desire that you and Signior Albino will dine with me.

I thank you, Sir, for your invitation, answered Mr. Clifford; but I cannot think of forsaking my friend Livingstone.

Surely, Sir, cried Mrs. Barnwell, no apology is neces-

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ıse he was not invited. Every one ought to keep
ıity.

: a beggarly soil will pride flourish! said Mr.
ften we had left them. Poor Barnwell took this
ın, not only without a shilling, but a hundred
debt to milliners and others: and she knows
not ignorant of this; for they have quarrelled
my presence.

fford having ordered a dinner at the public house,
› the meeting. The building was small and un-
but in real grandeur it far surpassed many state-
. When God manifest in the flesh came sud-
ne second temple, its glory was rendered far
ın that of the first. And it is the presence of
ehovah among his servants, that gives a digni-
neanest place of worship, which cannot be con-
a profusion, either of stones and mortar, or of
ilver. The place was large enough for the num-
rshippers, and sufficiently magnificent for those
ıfluenced by the spirit of their divine Master,
ed this part of his dominions in a stable, and re-
it on the cross. You and I, my dear friend,
ght otherwise, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Barnwell;
ıow convinced, through the divine mercy, that if
ty does not humble us to the very dust, it does
›r us.

seated ourselves on a form, among a decent but
›le, whose attention was so great that it would
almost possible to hear the falling of a pin, the
who appeared to be about fifty years of age, and
ıd colour of whose hands showed, that, like Paul,
liged to make use of them for his own and his
ıpport, read the 92d psalm by Watts, which the
ion sung with great devotion. Mr. Clifford held
erchief all the time before his eyes. In prayer,
› extemporary, Mr. Lowe appeared to have awful
he majesty of God, joined with a humble confi-
is mercy.

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His text was Rev. iii. 22. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.*—Mr. Lowe, in a very impressive manner, stated the importance of a reverential regard for the word of God. Mr. Clifford heard with great attention, and, as he told us at dinner, with great pleasure.

In the afternoon, the text was in John vii. 37. *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* Mr. Lowe proved, both by arguments and examples, that no created good, whether it be riches, or pleasure, or honour, can satisfy the desires of an immortal soul; but that, after the greatest possible enjoyment of these, a thirst will remain, which can only be removed by the promises and prospects of the gospel, by the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and by a sense of reconciliation through Jesus Christ, with that holy Being against whom we have sinned.

When divine worship was concluded, Mr. Clifford invited this good man to drink a cup of tea with us, to which he consented. He was very meek and unassuming, and appeared to be perfectly contented with his situation. Mr. Clifford asked him what he received yearly from his hearers. He answered, on an average about ten pounds, which he said he looked upon as a very liberal contribution, when he considered the poverty of those who subscribed it.

Ten pounds! cried Mr. Clifford; you amaze me. Be so kind, Sir, as to accept of this, (at the same time offering him a sum of money in a silk purse.)

I cannot accept so great a favour, especially at this time, said Mr. Lowe: however, I return you, Sir, my sincere thanks.

What is the reason, said Mr. Clifford, that you cannot accept it?

The reason, replied he, is this. Your passions have been warmed by hearing the gospel. Such impressions are sometimes lasting, and at other times only temporary. There can be no fruit without blossom; but there is sometimes blossom without fruit. If this should only be a sudden flow of the affections, without any genuine love to the

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truth, you would regret what you had done. This, Sir, I am not willing to hazard.

God forbid, cried Mr. Clifford, putting the money into his pocket. I would much rather that a mill-stone should be tied about my neck, and that I should be cast into the sea.—But, my friends, you must all promise to dine with me on Wednesday at one o'clock: it will make a longer afternoon.—To this we consented.

With my kind respects to my good friends at Islington,

I am, dear Sir, your obedient
And obliged servant,
ANTONIO ALBINO.

LETTER LXXXV.

From Signior Albino to Mr. James Neville.

DEAR SIR,

MR. Lowe and Thomas and I went, according to our appointment, to dine with Mr. Clifford, on Wednesday last. The first thing Mr. Clifford said was, that he was exceedingly pleased and much instructed by Mr. Lowe's sermons.

We took a walk in the gardens; and while Thomas and I were admiring the works of art, as well as of nature, and observing that both were equally the gifts of God, we found that our companions had deserted us. They soon rejoined us; but we knew not the reason of their absence till we were returning to the house.

We then learned, that Mr. Clifford had beckoned Mr. Lowe to go with him, and that when they were in a remote part of the garden he said—Well, my dear Sir, I have had time to consider whether I can part with my money to a servant of Jesus Christ, and I am thankful that I can do it with pleasure. This (putting a purse into his hand) contains twice as much as the other did, and I will be your friend in future. Mr. Clifford, after having lamented his former enmity to the gospel, and blessed God for his mercy manifested in Jesus Christ, thus continued;

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O my friend, hope from any other quarter is despair; but in the Son of God I behold a fulness capable of supplying all my wants. But why do you not put up that trifle I have presented you with? I can now receive it, replied Mr. Lowe, with great thankfulness, and with inexpressible pleasure, as fruit which will abound to your account.

After dinner Mr. Clifford began the conversation with praising the simplicity of the dissenting worship. The church of Rome, said he, in the magnificence of its temples, in the vestments of its priests, and in its ostentatious ceremonies, has taken for its model the old Testament dispensation. In these things the church of England too nearly resembles the church of Rome. The dissenting worship appears to me far more congenial to the spirituality of the Christian dispensation. But do you not think, Sir, said he to Mr. Lowe, that there are real Christians in protestant national churches?

Mr. Lowe. I have no doubt of it; and in Catholic national churches also. But if the bishops of Rome had, as Christians, been equal to Paul or John, yet in their official capacity, they would have been the heads of the anti-christian body.

Mr. Clif. If a member of a national church may be a Christian, is it unlawful for a Christian to continue in a national Church?

Mr. Lowe. A Christian is not contented with being merely in a safe state, but anxiously desires to make the revealed will of God the rule of his practice. If any one were to say to me, "I have examined the New Testament with a sincere desire to learn whether it be lawful to continue in a national church, and I have prayed to God for direction, and am after all persuaded that it is not my duty to leave it," I should thus reply: You ought undoubtedly to act according to your judgment; but it is your duty to examine whether your judgment be not biassed by the prospect of worldly interest, or by the fear of temporal disadvantage. Either of these is sufficient to bar the gate of heaven against you.

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Mr. Clif. It undoubtedly becomes us to take heed, that we do not condemn ourselves in those things which we venture to practice.

After a short pause, Thomas said to Mr. Lowe, I have had many thoughts concerning the 1260 days or years mentioned in the Revelation. When do you think, Sir, they began? Was it at the civil establishment of Christianity, or when the pope became a temporal prince?

Mr. Lowe. Both opinions may be right. As the Babylonish captivity of seventy years had different beginnings and different endings, so may it be with regard to the reign of antichrist. When the emperor of Rome professed himself a Christian, the "let" or hindrance was removed, whereby Judaizing Christians were impeded in making a gain of godliness. After that event, there was little or no obstruction to the gratification of the selfish passions, except that which arose from competition between the contending parties. 1260 years from the year 312, when Christianity or rather antichristianism was established, bring us down to the latter part of the sixteenth century, when considerable progress had been made in the divine art of printing, and in the Reformation. As antichrist began visibly to rise, and to deny the Son of God as Head of the church, when Constantine had taken the "let" out of the way, so at the expiration of 1260 years from that time he began visibly to fall. For what is a pope or an archbishop of Canterbury, now, compared with their predecessors in the time of our Henry the second? But if, for the commencement of the reign of antichrist, the time be fixed on when he became a temporal prince, its conclusion will bring us to the year 2016, at which period it is possible that the antichristian hierarchy will be totally extirpated. In my opinion, however, neither the pope and his clergy, nor the protestant bishops and their clergy, think that it will continue so long. The diffusion of knowledge has long made the ground tremble whereon that great great city is built; and its inhabitants feel the shaking.

Mr. Clif. The dissenters are sometimes spoken of as a

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disloyal body of people. Is there any ground for such a charge?

Mr. Lowe. There are certainly intemperate persons among them, as well as in the church of England; and a few such characters attract a great deal of public notice, and are beheld with exultation by the high-church party: but taking them as a body, there certainly is not the least foundation for such a charge. Their political principles are now the very same which they were in the reigns of George I. and George II. when they were considered and treated by government as inferior to none in attachment to the Hanoverian family, while the bulk of the established clergy were in opposition to the court. During the present reign the clergy have gone over to the court; and it is become the fashion to call the dissenters disloyal. As under different administrations opposite measures are pursued, it would be the basest hypocrisy to pretend to approve of both. But I am firmly persuaded that, under the most unpopular administrations, they would be the last persons in the kingdom to abet riot or rebellion.

Mr. Clif. What do you think would be the conduct of the dissenters in case of an invasion?

Mr. Lowe. That they would be surpassed by none in the zealous defence of their country.

Mr. Clif. Don't you think, Sir, that they would, with pleasure, take an active part in the demolition of religious establishments?

Mr. Lowe. They are the most determined enemies of rioting, and of anarchy and could not do so without first renouncing their principles. With respect, Sir, to my few hearers, they are a poor people; they understand nothing about politics, nor do they meddle with them. I teach them to honour the king, and to obey magistrates in civil concerns; but to learn their religion entirely from the holy Scriptures, and in the concerns of their souls to consider themselves as accountable only to God.

Mr. Clif. I thank you, Sir, for your answers to my inquiries. They are perfectly satisfactory to me.

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The conversation at tea was on miscellaneous subjects.

I am, with due respect to all my good friends at Islington, Dear Sir,

Your obliged friend and servant,

ANTONIO ALBINO.

LETTER LXXXVI.

From Mr. Charles Clifford to Mr. Henry Clifford.

MY DEAR AND HONOURED FATHER,

I HAVE received the joyful information that my beloved Eusebia is in the United States. I intend, with the divine permission, to embark in the first ship that sails for America, whether from London or Bristol. She is in the family of a Christian Jew. They are most worthy people. How kind the providence of God has been to her, to introduce her into so excellent a family. I long to be under sail, and clear of the British channel. How I shall delight to see the shores of the country which contains my Eusebia. I hope to be there in two months: but that will be a long time.

Mrs. Worthington received yesterday a parcel by the Mentor, which had a passage of six weeks from New-York. It contained eleven letters from Eusebia, and a letter to Mr. William Neville from a friend of his who resides in Connecticut.

I have read two letters from Signior Albino, wherein he gives an account of his going with you and Thomas Livingstone to Barnwell meeting, and also of his dining at your house with Thomas and Mr. Lowe. I rejoice, and my friends rejoice, that we have received so strong a confirmation of your love to the Redeemer, in the kindness of which you have shown to him in the person of one of his servants.

I have sent my servant to Bristol to inquire whether there is a vessel there that is on the point of sailing. It

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will be a fortnight before one will sail from London, and I cannot think of waiting so long.

Our friends intend to return into the country the day after to-morrow. I am, my dear Father,

Your dutiful and affectionate son,

CHARLES CLIFFORD.

LETTER LXXXVII.

From Mr. James Neville to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY DEAR CHILD,

HOW manifest are the favours which a good and gracious God bestows on his rebellious creatures! Help me to adore his name, from whom I have received mercies great beyond my conception, and more numerous than my faults. My sins have abounded; but his grace has much more abounded. I have a hundred things to tell you; and were the task completed, a hundred more would present themselves to my view.

I had every reason, my dear child, to suppose that you were in the depths of the sea; and I accused myself of having been your murderer. You can have no conception of the grief with which I have been overwhelmed. But these afflictions were mercies in disguise. I learn by your letters which we have received from New-York, that it was the swindler and his daughter who perished. Well! had it not been for that deception, you might have perished also. The stealing of your clothes and money, distressing as it was to you, has been a mercy to me. They were recovered from the ship, together with the book which contained the correspondence between you and your friends, transcribed with your own hand, every word of which brought to my mind that form with which I had been so long and so justly delighted. O my Eusebia! you cannot know the feelings of a parent's heart, till you yourself are a parent. My severity proceeded from a zeal for your welfare. But your letters and those of your friends,

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through the divine blessing, have made me think very differently both of you and of myself. I have seen that my zeal was a blind zeal, not regulated by the word of God: that my confidence was chiefly placed in external forms of devotion, and in almsgiving; and that the love of God, and faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ, constituted no part of my religion. But I bless God that he has enabled me to say with Paul, *What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.*

Will you not rejoice with me when I tell you, that at my return, I found your poor persecuting sister sitting at the feet of Jesus, and learning her religion entirely from his word? In attempting to answer the correspondence between you and your friends, she found (to use her own expression) that you were an angel, and that she had been a devil. But she, as well as myself, has repented *in dust* and ashes.

She had sent for Miss Barnwell, who was at the Abbey when we arrived, but who, fearing me as a monster, as *in*deed all persecutors are, immediately fled to Thomas Livingstone's. I sent for her, when I knew she was there, merely because she was your friend; and she has been a great blessing to me and to Signior Albino, in establishing us in the truth. Yes, my daughter, would you have thought it? Signior Albino has renounced the pageantry of popery, and has cast himself, as a guilty sinner, upon the mercy of God manifested in Jesus Christ.

The good Thomas Livingstone is my steward, and Mary Livingstone is my housekeeper. The chapel is purified from every appearance of popery; and your brother, at our unanimous desire, presides in the worship of God, which consists in singing Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns, in prayer, and in a practical exposition of the Scriptures.

Your dear friend Miss Barnwell is now your sister; the happy wife of a happy husband. Mr. Charles Clifford, the bearer of this letter, is become as great a friend to Christianity as he was an enemy. I bless God that such cases are not uncommon. His gray-haired father, too, has

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fallen as a penitent at the feet of Jesus, crying out, like the lepers in ancient times, Unclean! Unclean! and has received mercy. O Eusebia, things are strangely altered here, to my great satisfaction and delight.

Having given you this summary of what has taken place at the Abbey, and at my friend Clifford's, it would be improper to omit, that both you and I are greatly indebted to the care and assiduity of Mr. Charles Clifford, in endeavouring to find you out in France. He merits the esteem of us all. It would not displease me to hear that he has a chief place in your esteem.

I find myself to be insolvent when I think of the good Mr. Levi, and his kind wife and daughter. I can never pay the debt I owe them. Pray present to them my kindest, my best respects, and tell them that if they should ever come to England, I shall be happy in rendering them every service in my power. I am also very much obliged to the good Mr. Bethune, to whom, and to his family, please to present the same respects, accompanied with the same invitation.

It is unnecessary for me to tell you how much your brother and your new sister have been distressed on your account, and how strongly they feel themselves interested in every thing that relates to you. Your sister Maria, and your old tutor, possess now an affection for you equally tender, but mixed with great remorse on account of their former conduct.

They all unite with me in every thing to you that is kind and affectionate. I am, my dear Eusebia,

Your most affectionate father,

JAMES NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

From Mr. William Neville to Mr. and Mrs. Bethune.

MY HONOURED PARENTS,

FOR such I shall ever esteem you, I received your obliging, your most kind letter, in which you and your family

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feel for my supposed distresses, and wish to relieve them. Please to assure my brothers and sisters, that I shall always retain a fraternal regard for them.

Mr. Charles Clifford, the bearer of this letter, can acquaint you with every thing that you can desire to know concerning me. This gentleman had a pious mother, who died while he was a child: his education, therefore, wholly devolved upon his father. Mr. Henry Clifford had many good properties as a man, but no religion. As a father, he has always been most tender of his son, who is his only child; as a master, he has ruled with gentleness; and as a landlord, nothing has given him greater pleasure than to see his tenants get forward in the world. In a word, he is a compassionate, generous man.

Mr. Henry Clifford early imbibed a contempt of the clergy, as well as of religion, which he seemed to *think* inseparably connected. But I have the satisfaction to *tell* you, that I have every reason to believe that his *sins are* pardoned, and that he possesses that love of the supreme Being which distinguishes true Christianity from Christianity so corrupted as to be the promoter of ambition, avarice, and sensual gratification.

The son walked in the steps of his father. He received a polite education, and having made the tour of Europe, returned to England with impressions unfavourable to the Christian religion. In this state of mind he made his addresses to Miss Barnwell, a religious lady, by whom they were rejected. That lady, whom my dear Eusebia must have mentioned to you, I have now the happiness to call my wife. We had been married a month when the letters from you and my sister arrived at Mrs. Worthington's, at whose house we then were on a visit, together with my father and sister and Mr. Charles Clifford.

This gentleman being in the company of Miss Barnwell and of my sister Eusebia, the latter not only confuted his deistical opinions, but also in some measure convinced him of the truth of our holy religion. He then received an arrow from the divine quiver, and the wound could not be

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healed but by an application of the blood of Jesus Christ. This conversation happened but a little time before my father and she came to St. Omer's to see me. When he heard of her supposed shipwreck, he was inconsolable. He visited all the seaports on the coasts of England and France, that he might gain some intelligence concerning her; and I perceive by her letters that they were both at Dunkirk at the same time.

It is my desire, my dear parents, that you will intercede with my Eusebia in behalf of Mr. Clifford. My friends, who are fully acquainted with, and who highly value this gentleman, unite with me in the same request, as well as in earnestly advising my sister not to reject him.

I beg you to assure Mr. Levi and his family, that we entertain a high sense of their worth, and consider ourselves inexpressibly indebted to them for their disinterested kindness to my dear Eusebia. Please to tell that dear girl, that I had no time to write to her. Mr. Clifford came to take leave of us sooner than I expected, and indeed before I had begun to write. He is impatient to depart, fearing he should lose his passage to Boston.

I intended to say something concerning the divine mercy to my dear father and sister; but time will not permit. Mr. Clifford will give you all the information concerning us that you can desire.

With sincere respects to my brothers and sisters, and all my good friends in America,

I am, my dear parents,
Your dutiful and affectionate son,
WILLIAM NEVILLE.

LETTER LXXXIX.

From Mrs. Neville to Miss Eusebia Neville.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER,

YOU know I always greatly loved you, both as a friend, and after that as a Christian; but I myself did not know how

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much, till I feared I should never see you any more in the present world. If I loved you thus affectionately when you were lost, I do not love you less now that you are found; and if this was the case when I was Miranda Barnwell, it is not less so now that I am the wife of your dear brother, and can in a new sense call you my sister.

We all feel the most lively gratitude to our heavenly father for his kind preservation of you, when we had every reason to suppose that you had long since made your bed in the mighty waters.

We have read your eleven letters to my aunt, with great pleasure, and that from the good Mr. Bethune with equal satisfaction. The excellent Mr. Levi, too, and his amiable wife and daughter, are the objects of our admiration and esteem. Benevolence and brotherly love are the balm of life, the cement of society. He who practises them *most*, is best acquainted with the rare art of rendering happy both himself and all with whom he is connected. Selfishness, on the other hand, promises great things to deluded mortals, but performs nothing. From this source arise disagreements between masters and servants, parents and children, husbands and wives, kings and subjects, and kingdom and kingdom.

My dearest Eusebia, you will not find Mr. Charles Clifford the same person he was when he conversed with you at Barnwell, but the meek, the humble Christian, sitting at the feet of Jesus, and hearing those words of eternal life which proceeded out of his mouth. His father also has been brought to abhor himself in dust and ashes. He has been with Signior Albino and Thomas Livingstone to Barnwell meeting, to hear the good Mr. Lowe. He was greatly affected during the whole time, and appeared to be much edified and comforted.

I am the zealous advocate of this gentleman. He merits my Eusebia's esteem. I have not the least doubt that he will be a good husband.

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My letter is wanted. Present my love to all your friends, and accept the same from,

My dear sister,
Yours with the greatest affection,
MIRANDA NEVILLE.

LETTER XC.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mr. James Neville.

MY DEAR AND HONOURED FATHER,

NEVER could I have expected that a time would arrive when I should address you with fear and trembling;—much less that, while you were living, I should be an orphan, and compelled to wander far from those pleasing scenes which first made an impression on my tender years. The consideration that I have no interest in your affections, nor in the esteem of those whom I held, and still hold most dear to me, is very grievous; and this calamity is not lessened but increased, by the thought that I have never, I hope, once offended you, except in those things wherein my everlasting salvation is concerned: and there, I dare call no one father or master on earth, nor subject my conscience to the direction of any fallible teacher. Rather than do this, I have chosen to cast myself upon divine providence, and to trust to the mercy of strangers. O my dear father, what a consolation would it be to me to think, that you had been guiltless of these my trials. Had I suffered by the hand of an enemy, it had been comparatively a light affliction. I continually pray for you, for my beloved but unkind sister, and for the well-meaning but misinformed father Albino, that you may be convinced that the Christian religion does not authorize one person to force the conscience of another. O that you did but know the value of that religion! As it exists in the sacred oracles, it is a well-spring of life: polluted by human interpretations,

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and mixed with spurious traditions, it is a fountain of death.

With respect to the place of my present residence, suffice it to say, that a vast ocean separates me from my dear and honoured parent. I do not intend to recross it. My wants, which are few, I can supply by means of my industry. There is no prospect of my being married at present. I have had many suitors; but all of them have been destitute of the most important qualification, the fear of God. O my dear friends, what darkness has covered the earth, in consequence of the attempts of worldly men to make Christianity the road to wealth, honour, and sensual gratifications. How is it that you cannot perceive that Christianity, as it is taught in the New Testament, countenances none of those corruptions of it which have taken place among worldly-minded priests, and their deluded followers, who suppose that gain is godliness?

The country in which providence has placed me, has *this* excellence above most, if not all the countries of the earth, —there is no national religion in it. What a blessing is this to the inhabitants. As I probably shall never see you again in this world, I pray that my dear parent and sister may learn their religion from the Holy Scriptures. Then I may hope to see them where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

If I have not mentioned my dear brother till now, he will easily believe that it proceeds not from want of affection. The reason is, I know not where Providence has placed him. Permit me, Sir, to assure you, that he was ignorant of my intention to escape from St. Omer's.

I live in a family where I am useful, and where I meet with respect. Besides working with my needle, I teach a boy of ten years of age Latin, and am perfecting a young lady in English. I thank you, my dear parent, for my education. My thanks are also due to Signior Albino, whose care and tenderness I shall ever remember with gratitude, while I shall endeavour to forget his unkindness.

It was my intention, when I began this letter, to conceal

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the place of my residence. You cannot, however, but discover that I am in the United States. I dare not tell you where I am to be found. Yet, alas, what reason have I to suppose that you will be anxious about it?

I shall continue to pray for you, and for my dear brother and sister, and Signior Albino, and am, what I trust I have ever been,

My dear Father,

Your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XCI.

From Mr. William Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

MY dear Mrs. Neville, my sister, and I, returned yesterday from my father's estate in Northumberland.

On Monday last Mr. Barnwell went to dine with Major Ford of Monkwell. Mrs. Barnwell, pretending to be ill did not accompany him. Mr. Barnwell returned late in the evening, and inquiring for his wife, was informed by the servants, that soon after he left home, Captain Dulverton came in a postchaise, and that their mistress told them, as she was poorly, she would take an airing with the Captain. They wondered, they said, at her taking several bundles with her, but thought they had no right to interfere. She did not forget to take the money in the house, which amounted to more than five hundred pounds. The groom was ordered by his master to pursue them, and, if he could gain intelligence of them, to write to him immediately, as he was determined, he said, to make an example of them. I hear he is not returned. Mr. Barnwell did not know of the loss of his money till the next morning.

Mr. Clifford dined with us to-day. He has seen Mr. Barnwell, who, he says, is more afflicted at the loss of his money than of his wife. It was on the part of Dulverton a flagrant breach of hospitality, as well as of all laws human and divine. He was upon the most friendly terms with

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Mr. Barnwell, and dined at his house once or twice a week. He recommended himself to his notice by being what is termed an excellent shot, as well as a great mimic, which properties are a poor foundation for friendship.

Yesterday morning Mr. Barnwell found a letter in the bed which appeared to have been put under the pillow. The contents were nearly as follow:

"MR. BARNWELL,

"I thought it proper on leaving you, to give you this "bill of divorcement. Know then that I am gone forever. "I have made free with a little of your cash. Think your- "self well off: I once had an opportunity, which I am sor- "ry I did not embrace, of taking twice the sum. I would "rather go a begging with a man of my choice, than live "in affluence with one I never loved."

I cannot leave this unpleasing subject without remarking that a great proportion of human misery flows from the want of religion, and in particular, that without the fear of God there can be no true social bliss.

Mr. Clifford tells me that he has never omitted going to Barnwell meeting since he was there with Signior Albino and Thomas Livingstone. I never knew, said he, till now, what real happiness is. The mercy of God through Jesus Christ is a fountain of felicity which cannot be exhausted.

Mrs. Neville is well, and unites in best respects to you with,

Dear Madam,

Most sincerely yours,

WILLIAM NEVILLE.

LETTER XCII.

From Mrs. Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

MY DEAR AUNT,

MY dear Mr. Neville has desired me to write to you, that I may have the pleasure of sending you good tidings.

My father dined with us to-day. As he rode by the window I saw that he was pleased. He smiled as he came into the parlour. Mr. Neville asked him if Mrs. Barnwell

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was returned, that he looked so joyful. O no, cried he, it is better than that. I had rather that the ten plagues of Egypt should have come than she. But John Wake is returned.—What, he overtook them then, and recovered your money?—O no, replied he, the honest fellow could neither see nor hear of them.

I cannot understand then, said Mr. Neville, what reason you have for being so joyful.

I will tell you, answered he. When that villain Dulverton came in the chaise, my wife, who had been employed in packing up every thing valuable, that would lie in a little compass, called Wake to carry a box which she gave him, ordering him to place it under the seat of the chaise, and saying that she would send some bundles to be put with it. As Wake was carrying the box he thought it very heavy, and upon shaking it heard the sound of money. It immediately struck him that something wrong was going on; so he set down the box in the chaise, and, when the chambermaid brought the bundles, put them under the seat. Then putting the box under his frock, he carried it off without being observed.

When he returned, continued my father, I asked him if he had heard any thing of Dulverton. Nothing, Sir, said he, though I made all the inquiry I could. I was afraid that all was not right; therefore when I was putting the things into the chaise-box——You infamous villain, cried I, what, did you send off my property? I beg you to get out of my sight. The poor fellow left the room almost in tears. I was immediately sorry for being in a passion, knowing that he was obliged to obey the commands of his mistress. He soon returned with the box. Sir, said he, when I was putting the things into the chaise-box, I was afraid all was not right; therefore putting this box under my frock, I carried it to your library. Taking the box from Wake, I broke it open, and found not only my five hundred pounds, but two hundred pounds besides which she had robbed me of at sundry times, together with watches, rings, and every thing of value which she could put into it.

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I was never so delighted in my life. I gave the honest fellow ten guineas for his prudence and fidelity, and asked him why he did not tell me the night I came home. As soon as you saw me, Sir, replied he, you ordered me to follow them. At that moment I forgot the box; but I thought about it all the time I was out.—My father concluded with saying, Well my friends, was I not in the right when I said that this was better than the return of Mrs. Barnwell? This question we all answered in the affirmative.

When they cannot find the box, I think the affection of the lovers will grow cool. But as she took some other valuable articles, they may agree tolerably well for the present. When these are disposed of, I am firmly persuaded he will forsake her.

Wickedness frequently meets with its reward in the present life. But if vengeance tarry, and seem to sleep, the time is coming when it will certainly awake, to the everlasting confusion of all those who habitually say, "God hath forgotten; he hideth his face; he will never see it." Such persons are as much the objects of pity, as their crimes are of detestation. How miserable must this unhappy woman be, without money, without a character, without humility to enable her to be content with *little*, without the consolation of believing that she suffers in the cause of righteousness, and, which is worst of all, without a God to fly to for refuge, or a just hope that any thing will turn up in her favour either here or hereafter. The poor used to be the objects of her contempt: but whom upon the face of the earth can she now find more poor and wretched than herself? She thought that her schemes were so well concerted that nothing could overturn them, or she would not have had the insolence to write such a letter as she did, to a man who had not merely taken her without a fortune, but who had paid her debts.

We all unite in kind respects to my dear aunt.

I ever remain her affectionate niece,

MIRANDA NEVILLE.

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LETTER XCIII.

From Mrs. Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

YESTERDAY being Mr. Neville's birthday, my father, Mr. Clifford, and Dr. Mildmay, were invited to dinner. About one o'clock, as we were all sitting in the parlour which looks into the court, we heard a carriage drive in. I could not imagine who was come, as our friends who had been invited were arrived. Looking through the window I saw our dear Eusebia, accompanied by another young lady. At that instant there was a general cry that Eusebia was come. In a moment we were all in the court to welcome her return. What a tender and affecting meeting it was may be more easily conceived than related. Her father clasped her to his bosom, and wept over her, at the same time blessing God that he had lived to see so joyful a day. This meeting was so unexpected, and so welcome, that every one present shed tears of joy. We all asked questions at the same moment. Mr. Clifford, Where she had left his son? Mr. William Neville, How Mr. Bethune and family did? Mr. Neville, Whether she had had a good voyage, and where she landed? And I, Whether this young lady was not Miss Levi? Miss Neville could not speak. In her there was such a conflict between remorse and joy, that she could only fall on her dear sister's neck; —they both wept and embraced each other;—the sight was truly affecting. Nor was Signior Albino less affected: he blessed God that he had permitted him again to behold his dear young lady. She replied to all at once, I thank God for his goodness to me, and to all my dear friends.

This tumult of the passions shortly subsided; and, when we were all seated, she told us, that having been accidentally informed at New-York of the great mercy which God

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had shown to her dear father and Signior Albino, and of her brother's marriage, *that* England to which she had before determined never to return, became the object of her continual desire. I therefore, continued she, told my kind friends Mr. and Mrs. Levi, and my dear sister, (taking hold of the young lady's hand,) that I *must* go to England.

We all congratulated Miss Levi on her safe arrival among us; and my father said, that next to his own Eusebia, no person could have arrived whom he should have been more happy to see. Miss Levi replied, that the friends of her beloved sister could not but be dear to her, and that her parents desired their kind respects to the family of her friend.

Dinner being announced, we went into the dining-room, and Mr. Neville remarked that this was the happiest birthday he had ever seen; and that God having in great mercy restored his child to him as it were from the dead, he could now die in peace.

As Eusebia had not answered Mr. Clifford's question concerning his son, Mr. Neville repeated the inquiry; but we found that she had left New-York before his arrival.

The servants did not partake last nor least in the general joy. No sooner likewise was it known that our dear Eusebia was arrived, than the bells of the village church began to ring; and last night all the windows in Thornton were illuminated. Mr. Neville has always had at heart the interest of his tenants and of the poor, and is by all of them greatly beloved.

The company broke up; but my father, Mr. Clifford, and Dr. Mildmay, repeated their visit this morning.

Eusebia presents her kind respects to you, and desires me to say, that as soon as she shall have recovered from the fatigue of her journey you shall hear from her.

I am, my dear aunt,

Your dutiful niece,

MIRANDA NEVILLE.

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LETTER XCIV.

From Miss Eusebia Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

I BLESS God that I am again in my father's house, and that I am writing to my dear Mrs. Worthington from my own closet, not as formerly with fear and trembling, but with the full consent and approbation of my family. These are great mercies; but I hope I shall not forget, that the dangers attending prosperity are far greater than those which attend adversity.

My last letter, Madam, informed you of my being at Mrs. Bethune's, with Mrs. Levi and her daughter. We enjoyed much pleasure in this valuable family, and were greatly edified by their conversation and example. I was delightfully situated, and I enjoyed much happiness. In numerous excursions two or three miles round with my young friends, I pointed out to them the wisdom of God in the works of creation; and while we admired the fruitful country around us, and the charming prospects of the sea and Long-Island at a distance, I conversed with them concerning the important truths of divine revelation.

On the Lord's day Mr. Bethune conducted the worship of God in a neat building which had been erected for the purpose. Most of the people in the neighbourhood attended, and some from a considerable distance.

One day Mr. and Mrs. Bethune and Mrs. Levi returned from a walk, accompanied by a Jewish merchant, who had known Mr. and Mrs. Levi in Holland. He dined, and spent the afternoon with us. He attacked Mr. Bethune upon the subject of the trinity.

Pray, Sir, said he, how do you understand these words, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God?* Did not the writer believe that there were at least two Gods, one of whom was with the other? Did not Jesus intimate the same thing when he

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said, *Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was?* And do not Christians, in consequence of this manner of speaking, plead for the eternity of the Son, as well as of the Father and of the holy Spirit?

Mr. Bethune. You have no more right to attribute the belief of two Gods to John or Jesus, than to Moses and the prophets. Moses often gives the name of Jehovah to the Angel of the Lord, and the prophets ascribe divine names and characters to the Messiah. This implies a plurality of persons in the divine essence, but not a plurality of Gods.

Jew. How can these things be?

Mr. B. God can be comprehended by himself only. None by searching can find him out. We see his natural perfections in his works, and his moral perfections in his providence and his word. Beyond this neither angel nor man can go. If the New Testament maintain the unity of God, and yet sometimes speak as though in the divine essence there were more persons than one, the Old Testament does the same: you have, therefore, no ground of objection on this score to the one which is not equally applicable to the other.

Jew. Pray what do you mean by a plurality of persons in the divine essence? A person signifies a being distinct from all other beings. If this was not the case with Jesus, he was not a person at all, according to the common acceptation of the word.

Mr. B. The term person is used in different senses. As applied to the sacred Three, it is not used according to its common acceptation. Three human persons are three beings: the three divine Persons are only one Being. I do not maintain the personality of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in such a sense as infringes upon the unity of the divine essence.

Jew. In what sense, Sir, do you understand it?

Mr. B. To confess the truth, my ideas upon this subject are not clear and distinct. This is owing not to the false-

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hood of the doctrine of the trinity; of the truth of that doctrine I am fully convinced;—but to that incomprehensibility which attends all the attributes, operations, and designs of the Deity, as well as to his having made only a partial revelation of it, which is the case also with respect to the mysteries of providence, for the exercise of our humble and submissive faith. Yet I think it right to investigate, with religious humility, every part of divine revelation, and therefore the nature of the personality of the three divine Persons. In this inquiry, although I cannot attain to a full comprehension of the subject, yet by two different restraints I am kept from error. As by one restraint a planet is kept from falling into the sun, and by another from wandering into the boundless regions of space; so my belief of the unity of God, and of the doctrine of the trinity, restrains me from holding either doctrine in such a sense as is incompatible with my belief of the other. If I begin to deviate towards the common acceptation of the word person, my belief of the divine unity recalls me to the path in which I ought to move; or if, in maintaining the doctrine of the divine unity, I find myself wandering from the doctrine of the trinity, those passages of scripture which you have mentioned cause me to return the way by which I came.

Mrs. Levi closed the conversation by saying, I wish, Sir, you would read the Christian Scriptures. The morality of the New Testament, like that of the Old, is beyond all praise. And the Christian Messiah is the very Messiah that was predicted by the prophets. To receive him, therefore, cannot but be safe, while to reject him must be infinitely dangerous.

Mr. Charles Clifford has powerful advocates in my friends at Thornton, and in you also, Madam, as I perceive by those letters in which you mention him. I cannot tell what is the design of Providence. He has certainly given more than common proofs of his esteem for me, of which I entertain a grateful sense. But, God only knows, I may never see him any more. Although I have providentially

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been preserved twice in crossing that great ocean, yet it cannot be said that so long a voyage is attended with no danger. I pray that he may be preserved, and the more so, as I have been the occasion, though the innocent one, of his running these hazards.

I am, dear Madam,
Your sincere friend,
And very humble servant,
EUSEBIA NEVILLE.

LETTER XCV.

From Mrs. Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

MY DEAR AUNT,

MY father dined with us yesterday, as did also Mr. Clifford. The former gave us an account of his wife; the latter of his son, from whom he has received a letter relating that he had a very pleasant voyage to Boston, and how greatly he was disappointed when he did not find his Eusebia at New-York.

The box containing the treasure was not missed till Captain Dulverton and Mrs. Barnwell arrived in London at the inn; for, as the captain had undertaken to see the luggage shifted at the end of every stage, she entertained no doubt respecting the safety of the box; and he, having never seen it, could not miss it. When, however, it was missed, there was no small bustle. She was positive they had been robbed of it on the road, since she saw Wake, she said, put it into the chaise, than whom there was not an honester man in the world. He, on the other hand, was as positive that there was nothing which resembled either box or trunk when they arrived at the first stage; so that it was unnecessary to return and inquire about it, as she wanted him to do. This was a tragical beginning.

He had told her that an uncle who had resided in Kent was dead, and left him a noble house and a good estate.

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The plan which they had formed was, to spend a couple of months in London, and then to go and take possession of the estate, and live happily together till the death of my father, when he was to make her his wife. They had not been above a fortnight at ready-furnished lodgings in Covent Garden, for the benefit of being near the playhouses, before the cash ran short, in consequence of which she teased him daily, and almost hourly, to go and take possession of his estate, judiciously observing that it would be disgraceful to borrow money of their tenants at their first arrival among them. After much altercation, he told her in plain terms, that the estate in Kent was not so large but that it would go into the box which she pretended to have lost; and added, that they had outwitted each other. This confession was followed by mutual reproaches; and the most vulgar epithets were not sparingly used. The next morning he arose sooner than usual. Mrs. B. waited for him at breakfast, and, at length, becoming impatient, was told by the mistress of the house that the gentleman had paid for his lodgings about an hour before, and was gone with a porter whom he had brought to remove his things. She immediately trembled for her clothes, which, as she foreboded, he had actually taken away. In this distress, without a shilling, and without any other clothes than those on her back, I am informed that she applied to you, Madam, for the loan of a guinea, and that you gave her two, upon her promising to set off the next morning for Barnwell.

All this Mr. Pink told my father, at the same time observing how bitterly she repented: and although he did not directly ask him to take her again, he said that he had no doubt this would be a warning to her; that he had often heard her say how much she esteemed Mr. Barnwell; and that she considered the moment when she first saw the captain as the most unhappy in her life. My father told him that she should never enter his walls any more, at the same time showing him her insolent letter. Mr. Pink made no other reply than that he was very sorry.

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It was evening when she arrived from London. Her father, seeing her through the window, locked the door, and would not suffer her to be admitted. She then went to three of my father's tenants, all of whom told her that they could not think of incurring Mr. Barnwell's displeasure by harbouring a person who had used him so ill. At last she went to the house of poor old Edward Sutton the thrasher, where she was permitted to sit up all night. This man is a hearer of Mr. Lowe. He went in the morning to that good man, and intreated him to intercede with Mr. Pink in behalf of his daughter. Mr. Lowe readily undertook the task, and succeeded; so that she is now with her father and sister.

We are all very much pleased with Miss Levi. She is an amiable young lady. She said this morning while we were at breakfast, Our people have often attacked my father on account of our becoming Christians, telling him what wicked lives many Christians lead. My father replies, Are there not many wicked Jews? Were not the children of Israel who came out of Egypt very wicked? Real Christians worship and serve that God whom Abraham worshipped and served. They delight in the writings of Moses, and revere his character. No pious Jew ever loved our Scriptures more than they do. It is not every one who calls himself a Christian, that is a true Christian. True Christians fear and love the God of the Jews: surely then God cannot but love them. If they are the followers of Jesus Christ, it is because they believe him to be the Messiah predicted by the prophets.

We all unite in sincere respects to you.

I am, my dear aunt, your dutiful niece,

MIRANDA NEVILLE.

LETTER XCVI.

From Mrs. Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

MY DEAR AUNT,

WE dined yesterday at Mr. Clifford's.

On Mr. Clifford's saying that his son was very much

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pleased with America, and that he was very desirous that we should all go to live there, Miss Levi exclaimed, Oh, how greatly I should rejoice if that were to be the case: it would also afford inexpressible pleasure to my dear parents, and to Mr. and Mrs. Bethune.

My dear Miss Levi, replied Eusebia, to live near such highly beloved friends would afford me equal pleasure: but the leaving of our country is a matter of serious concern. What do you say to it, my dear father?

I am too far advanced in life, answered Mr. Neville, to take such a voyage. Besides, if I were there, I should never think myself at home; so great is the attachment which I feel to the land of my nativity, and to that part of it in particular in which I spent the years of childhood and of youth. I think also that, on many accounts, it would be wrong for us to leave our country.

To this we all assented.

Just as we were going to tea, a carriage drove into the court. Our dear Eusebia and I were near the window, and saw Mr. Charles Clifford stepping out of a postchaise. This sudden and unexpected appearance of a person whom Eusebia considered as her partner through life, and for whom she had a great esteem, overpowered her spirits. Seeing the colour leave her face, I hurried her into another room before he came in, and, by applying hartshorn and a little cold water, prevented her from swooning. He soon learned where she was, and came to pay his respects. I left them together, after he had told us that he had had a very disagreeable passage.

At the entreaty of his friends in America, he had almost determined to stay with them through the winter; but hearing that a vessel was to sail immediately from Boston to Bristol, he could not resist the desire he had to see Eusebia. During part of the voyage there was considerable danger; but he was supported by reading and meditating upon the 107th psalm. He reflected that he was in the Lord's hand, and that no real evil could befall him while he made God his refuge.

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My dear aunt, we begin to be very impatient for you to visit us. It will give us very great pleasure. But it would give us much greater if you would come and reside among us. Pray be so kind as to consider of it seriously. I hope and believe it would be for our mutual happiness. There is a pleasant house in Thornton unoccupied. But if it should be equally agreeable to you to reside at the Abbey, we have plenty of room. When we were lately talking about it, Mr. Neville remarked, that the society of the friends of the Redeemer is the greatest blessing which can be enjoyed in the present life. One misfortune would be, —the breaking up of our correspondence; but almost every earthly good has its alloy.

Mr. Charles Clifford unites with all my friends in kindest respects to you.

I am, my dear aunt,
Your affectionate niece,
MIRANDA NEVILLE.

P. S. Mr. C. C. has brought some letters from Mr. and Mrs. Levi, and Mr. Bethune, which have afforded us equal pleasure and instruction.

LETTER XCVII.

From Mrs. Worthington to Mrs. Neville.

MY DEAR NIECE,

I CONGRATULATE you and all my good friends at the Abbey on the arrival of Mr. Clifford. Should a union take place between him and Miss Eusebia Neville, I hope they will be happy. Marrying in the Lord is the best security for mutual happiness. It is safe, however, for Christians not to expect too much happiness in the married state: it rather becomes them to lay their account with finding some imperfections in those with whom they are united, who will in their turn find some imperfections in them.

I am very much obliged to my friends for their invita-

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tion. I think it would increase my happiness to reside near those whom I so greatly esteem: and I intend, with the divine permission, to take measures for my removal. It is my intention to pay you a visit at the Abbey, and there to come to a determination whether to reside with you, or at the house you mention at Thornton.

I am truly sorry for Mrs. Barnwell. I gave her the best advice in my power. I exhorted her, as there was little probability that she would derive much more happiness from the things of time, to seek her consolation in the things of eternity. I remembered that our Lord did not despise the outcasts of mankind. She was very thankful for my advice, and for the trifle which I gave her, and shed many tears. Whether her sorrow was on account of her guilt, or of her punishment, is best known to herself.

Miss Levi's wish to have her friends near her was very natural, and proceeded from the best of motives; but I cannot advise you to leave your native country. Europe is undoubtedly in a disagreeable situation, and I do not say that it is impossible for great evils to befall this kingdom. It must also be admitted, that in times of public calamity, God frequently permits the righteous to fall indiscriminately with the wicked: it ought not therefore to be expected that they should be without fear. Yet I am persuaded that, in a day of general distress, my God would either preserve me from the hurtful sword, or give me fortitude, and resignation to his will. We have not a high priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities: let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The vessel is indeed in a storm; but the Redeemer is in it; and many thousands of his friends are embarked with him, who weep in secret on account of the sins of the nation, and of their own personal transgressions. Who can tell but the Hope of Israel, who bestows upon his people the pardon of their sins, and who has promised that he will never leave them nor forsake them, will also hear, in

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heaven his dwelling-place, their prayers for the preservation of their country?

Remember me affectionately to my kind friends at Thornton Abbey. I ever remain,

My dear niece,

Affectionately yours,

MARY WORTHINGTON.

LETTER XCVIII.

From Mr. Levi to Miss Levi.

MY DEAREST SOPHIA,

YOUR mother and I remained on the wharf, and pursued the vessel with our sight till it was no longer visible. From that time you have been continually upon our heart; every thing reminds us of you; and it is our prayer day and night that our beloved daughter may be preserved from all evil, and may be the object of the gracious regard of our heavenly Father.

Till we had parted with you, we did not know how much we loved you. At some times your mother almost regrets that she consented to your leaving us; till I remind her that you are under the care of your dear sister, and that, under her kind tuition, you will enjoy every advantage that can be desired for improvement, both in human accomplishments and in Christian graces.

Since you left us, I have been much employed in reading the prophecies concerning the Messiah. I will select, and send some of them in this letter; for although it is a subject in which we have endeavoured to the utmost of our ability to instruct you, the importance of it is such that you cannot be too well established in it.

This exalted Personage was predicted to Adam under the name of 'the Seed of the Woman.' Also the enmity of unbelievers against him; 'I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed;'—his crucifixion; 'thou shalt bruise his heel,' (his human nature;) but yet his final victory; 'it shall bruise thy head,'" *Gen.* iii. 15.

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He was to descend from Abraham, *Gen.* xxii. 18; and from Jacob, *Gen.* xxviii. 14.

Jacob prophesied of him on his death-bed, *Gen.* xlix. 10.

Moses prophesied, that God would raise up a prophet from among their brethren like unto him; and that whosoever would not hearken unto him, God would require it of him, *Deut.* xviii. 18. It is added, probably by Ezra, 'There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses,' ch. xxxiv. 10. This honour was reserved for the Messiah.

He was to be of the seed of David. 'Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me,' *Ps.* lxxxix. 35, 36.

Solomon was a type of Christ, and many things are said of him in the 72d psalm which will apply in their full sense only to the Messiah; among others the following: 'They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.—All kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.—His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.'

In the days of Isaiah this descendant of David was not come, for he thus prophecies concerning him;—'And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.'—The prophet pro-

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oods to show, that the subjects of this excellent prince ould be persons renewed in the spirit of their mind. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard all lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young on, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead em. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young nes shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw ke the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole f the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the ockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my oly mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowdge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in at day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for n ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, nd his rest shall be glorious,' *Isai.* xi. 1—10.—Again. Unto us a child is born, (called, chap. viii. 14. and vii. 8. mmanuel, or God with us,) unto us a son is given; and he government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name hall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, he Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the ncrease of his government and peace there shall be no nd, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to rder it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, rom henceforth even for ever, ch. ix. 6, 7.

Though the kingdom of the Messiah was to be a kingom of peace, yet was he to be a great conqueror. 'Gird hy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory nd thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously ecause of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and hy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby he people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever nd ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,' *Ps.* xlv. 3—7.

He was to be not only the son of David, but the Son of God. 'I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask

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of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine *inheritance*, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession,' *Ps.* ii. 7, 8. Well therefore might the apostle assert his superiority to the angels, and say that 'he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.' *Heb.* i. 4. It was on this account that David in spirit called him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,' *Ps.* cx. 1.

As the Jehovah-Angel who appeared to our fathers was frequently called Jehovah, by the same name was the Messiah to be called. 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,' *Jer.* xxiii, 5, 6.

The time of the Messiah's advent was predicted.

1. It was to be while the second temple was standing. The ancient men who had seen the first temple, wept when the foundation of the second was laid. But the prophet said unto them, 'Fear ye not; for thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts: The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts,' *Hag.* ii. 5. 9.

2. It was to be before the departure of the sceptre from Judah. 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be,' *Gen.* xlix. 10. There were various steps by which it departed. One was, the going forth of the decree from Cæsar Augustus that the whole land should be taxed. Luke ii. . Another

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was, when the Romans took into their hands the power of inflicting capital punishment. But the sceptre did not entirely depart till the time of Vespasian, when the Romans took away both our place and nation.

3. It was to be before we had lost the knowledge of our tribes; otherwise the Messiah would not have been pointed out to us as being of the tribe of Judah and of the seed of David.

4. The very year was predicted. 'Seventy weeks, (or 490 years,) are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy,' *Dan.* ix. 24. These seventy weeks are divided into three periods. During the first, the work of restoration and reformation was carried on by Ezra and Nehemiah; the second reaches to the commencement of the ministry of John; and the third extends to the death of Messiah the prince.

A herald was to go before him. 'The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together,' *Isai.* xl. 3. 5.—Again. 'Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and Jehovah, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Angel of the covenant whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts,' *Mal.* iii. 1. This harbinger of the Messiah is also called Elijah. 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of Jehovah. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse,' *Mal.* iv. 5, 6. These prophecies were acccomplished in the person of John the baptist, who came in the spirit

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and power of Elijah, and who said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of Jehovah, as said the prophet Isaiah. He acknowledged that he was not the Messiah, but said that he was sent before him. He did not claim to be the bridegroom: he was the friend of the bridegroom, who stood and heard him, and rejoiced greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. It was no small honour, however, to be the morning star of the gospel dispensation; and it was not without reason that the angel said to Zacharias, 'Thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth,' *Luke* i. 14.

The place of the Messiah's nativity was to be Bethlehem. 'But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting,' *Mic.* v. 2.—The paraphrases written by our ancestors interpret this prophecy to mean, that the Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem. Our nation so understood it; for the chief priests and scribes, being asked where the Messiah should be born, replied, In Bethlehem of Judah, and quoted this very prophecy.

He was not to come with external grandeur. 'He shall grow up before him,' says the prophet, 'as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him,' *Isai.* liii. 2.—At the birth of Christ, the descendants of David were in a state of poverty. His mother offered the sacrifice of the poor; and He whose birth was announced by a multitude of the heavenly host, was laid in a manger because there was no room for him in the inn.

There were, however, to be some who would expect his appearance, and say, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the *Lord*; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation,' *Isai.* xxv. 9.—Accordingly there was a Simeon, who 'took him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord,

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now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation; which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.' There was also an Anna, who 'gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.' And although he came unto his own, and his own received him not, yet the gentile world sent as it were ambassadors to congratulate him on his arrival. 'They from Sheba came: they brought gold and incense, and showed forth the praises of the Lord,' *Isai.* lx. 6.

The enmity of the seed of the serpent was soon visible. Herod, that he might destroy the infant Messiah, slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in its vicinity, from two years old and under. Ramah participated in this calamity; and Rachel, who was buried near it, is supposed to rise from her grave, and in the beautiful language of prophecy, to weep a second time for her children: the first time was when they were carried into captivity by the general of the king of Babylon. See *Jer.* xl. 1. At each time 'a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping: Rachel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not,' *Jer.* xxxi. 15. To avoid the fury of Herod, Joseph and Mary took the young child and fled into Egypt; but after the death of Herod they returned, and 'out of Egypt,' a second time, 'God called his Son,' *Hos.* xi. 1. The omniscience of the Deity is displayed in his causing the inspired writers to use such language as refers to events in distant ages, and the full meaning of which is not known until the latter events take place. We see another instance of this in the first four verses of the 72d psalm. 'Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people; he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in

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pieces the oppressor.' Though these words refer immediately to Solomon, they look forward to the Messiah, in whom they were more fully accomplished. This appears from the fifth verse, 'They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations;'—in which language the inspired writer was carried beyond the type, and spake what would agree only to the antitype. Numerous instances of this double sense of prophecy may be observed by an attentive reader of the Jewish Scriptures.

After their return from Egypt, they dwelt in Nazareth, which was esteemed so contemptible a place, that it furnished the enemies of Jesus with matter for reproach, and thousands who could say nothing worse of him have called him the Nazarene. The old Testament abounds with prophecies of the obloquy that would be cast upon the Messiah: among others, see *Ps.* xxii. 6. 'But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.' These prophecies referred to all the reproach which he was to endure: but the evangelist singles out his being called a Nazarene as a direct fulfilment of them; saying, that 'he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene,' *Matt.* ii. 23.

Having lived many years in obscurity, he entered on his public ministry. Isaiah, after he had prophesied concerning his forerunner who was to cry in the wilderness, immediately proceeds to this event. 'O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord *God* will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him,' *Isai.* xl. 9, 10.

In the prospect of the same event, the prophet Malachi also says, 'But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refi-

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ner's fire, and like fuller's soap; and he shall sit as a re
ner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons
Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may
fer unto the *Lord* an offering in righteousness,' *Mal.* iii.
3.—This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus. 'And now al
the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore eve
tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down a
cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water un
repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier th
I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall bapti
you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. Whose fan is
his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and g
ther his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up t
chaff with unquenchable fire,' *Matt.* iii. 10. 12. Thou
he had to combat with the most crafty adversaries, th
could not abide the day of his coming; for he discern
their hearts, and knew their thoughts, *Matt.* ix. 4. xii. 2
Luke v. 22: He confounded them, and put them to silen
Matt. xxi. 27. *Mark* xii. 37. *Luke* xx. 26: And they we
afraid to ask him any more questions, *Matt.* xxii. 46. H
purifying the sons of Levi was fulfilled, when a great co
pany of the priests were obedient to the faith, *Acts* vi. 7.

The Messiah was also to reprove with equity for t
meek of the earth, *Isai.* xi. 4.—This our Lord did at d
ferent times. See particularly *Matt.* xii. 7, where he ju
tifies his disciples against the accusation of the Pharise
and reproves their reprovers. 'If,' said he, 'ye h
known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sac
fice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.'

Upon Galilee of the Gentiles a great light was to ari
Isai. ix. 1, 2.—This was fulfilled. 'And leaving Nazare
he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the s
coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nepthalim; that
might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the proph
saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nepthali
by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the ge
tiles; the people which sat in darkness saw a great ligh
and to them which sat in the region and shadow of dea
light is sprung up,' *Matt.* iv. 13. 16.

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The Messiah was to be zealous for the divine honour. 'The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me,' *Ps.* lxix. 9.—This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus. He 'found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting; and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and said, Take these things hence, make not my Father's house a house of merchandise,' *John*, ii. 14. 16.

He was to work miracles. 'Behold, the Lord *God* will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him,' *Isa* xl. 10. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert,' *Isai.* xxxv. 5, 6.—To those who came from John, desiring to know whether Jesus was the Messiah, he refused a direct answer, but appealed to facts, saying, 'Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached,' *Luke* vii. 22. The preaching of the gospel to the poor is the concluding part of the answer, as it was the crowning work of Christ, and that to which all the others were subservient; and corresponds to waters breaking out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.

He was to be free from ostentation. 'He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street,' *Isai.* xlii. 2.—Many instances of the modesty of the Redeemer are recorded by the evangelists. See *Mark* i. 44. iii. 12. v. 43. vii. 36. *Luke* viii. 56. He also recommended humility to his disciples. 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls,' Matt. xi. 29. And again, 'If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye

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also ought to wash one another's feet,' *John* xiii. 14. The king of Zion came unto her, not only just and having salvation, but also lowly; and every part of his deportment corresponded with that of his riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass, *Zech.* ix. 9.

Gentleness also was to form a part of the character of the Messiah. 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoaking flax shall he not quench,' *Isai.* xlii. 3.—This was so much the character of Jesus, that it even became proverbial. Hence Paul said to the Corinthians, 'Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ,' 2 *Cor.* x. 1.

To gentleness he was to add kindness and compassion. 'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young,' *Isai.* xl. 11.—Christ was 'the good shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep,' *John* x. 11.

> This was compassion like a God,
> That when the Saviour knew
> The price of pardon was his blood,
> His pity ne'er withdrew.

Yet this excellent personage was to be despised and persecuted by his cotemporaries. He was to be 'despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;' and after he had suffered every indignity and cruelty which the wickedness of men could devise, he was to be put to death. See *Isai.* liii.—All this was accomplished in the person of the Saviour. But it was 'not for himself,' *Dan.* ix. 26. It was our griefs which he bore, and our sorrows which he carried. 'He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed,' *Isai.* liii. 5.

The different stages of the sufferings of the Messiah were predicted by the prophets, and the sufferings of Jesus exactly correspond with their predictions.—The conspiracy of the rulers against him. 'The kings of the earth

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set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the *Lord*, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us,' *Ps.* ii. 2, 3.—The treachery of Judas. 'It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance,' *Ps.* lv. 12, 13.—The price for which he was sold. 'They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver,' *Zech.* xi. 12.—What became of it. 'And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord,' *Zech.* xi. 13. The chief priests bought with the thirty pieces of silver the potter's field to bury strangers in, *Matt.* xxvii. 7.—The flight of the disciples. 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the *Lord* of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered,' *Zech.* xiii. 7. When Jesus was apprehended, 'all the disciples forsook him and fled,' *Matt.* xxvi. 56. —His patience under the most cruel treatment before Caiphas and Pilate. 'I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting,' *Isai.* l. 6.—His silence in the presence of his judges. 'He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth,' *Isai.* liii. 7.—The rage of his enemies. Pilate wished to chastise him, and to let him go. But the mob 'were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed,' *Luke* xxiii. 23. Well might the Messiah say, 'Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion,' *Ps.* xxii. 12, 13. —The parting of his garments, and the casting of lots for

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his vesture. 'They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture,' *Ps.* xxii. 18.—The death by which he should die. 'The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet,' *Ps.* xxii. 16.—His excruciating pain, when the cross was raised from its horizontal position, and was fixed in the ground. 'I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint,' *Ps.* xxii 14.—His violent thirst. 'My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws,' *Ps.* xxii. 15.—The cruel aggravation of his sufferings by his enemies. 'They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink,' *Ps.* lxix. 21.—The desertion of him by his friends. 'I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none,' *Ps.* lxix. 20.—The insults of the spectators. 'All they that see me, laugh me to scorn. They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the *Lord* that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him, *Ps.* xxii 7, 8. 'They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,' *Matt.* xxvii. 39. 'The chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him,' *Matt.* xxvii. 41. 43.—Amid all this, his making 'intercession for the transgressors,' *Isai.* liii. 12. 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' *Luke* xxiii. 34.—His prayer to God, occasioned by that apparent desertion, which constituted an essential, and perhaps the principal part of his sufferings. 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' *Ps.* xxii. 1.—His dying words. 'Into thine hand I commit my spirit,' *Ps.* xxxi. 5.—His crucifixion between two malefactors, and his burial in the grave of a rich man. 'He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death,' *Isai.* liii. 9.

Thus was the Messiah brought 'into the dust of death'

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Ps. xxii. 15. But, notwithstanding 'the sorrows of death compassed him, God heard his voice out of his temple, and his cry came before him. Then the earth shook and trembled. He bowed the heavens also, and came down. He sent from above; he took him; he drew him out of many waters. He brought him forth also into a large place: he delivered him, because he delighted in him, *Ps.* xviii. He did not leave his soul in the invisible world; neither did he suffer his holy One to see corruption, *Ps.* xvi. 10.

Having continued with his disciples forty days, 'he ascended on high; he led captivity captive; he received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the *Lord* God might dwell among them, *Ps.* lxviii. 18. 'God went up with a shout; the *Lord* with the sound of a trumpet,' *Ps.* xlvii. 5. The gates of heaven lifted up their heads, and the everlasting doors were lifted up, that the LORD of hosts might come in,' *Ps.* xxiv. He entered into the presence of God, where there is fulness of joy; and sat at his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore, *Ps.* xvi. 11.

'Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession,' *Heb.* iv. 14. I pray, my beloved daughter, that you and I, and your dear Mother, may not be of them who draw back unto perdition; for then only shall we be made partakers of the heavenly crown, if we persevere unto the end.

Your mother's letter will contain an account of every thing that has occurred since you left us.

We shall continue to remember you constantly at the throne of grace, and we entreat you to pray constantly for us.

Do not fail to let us hear frequently from you.

I ever remain, my dearest Sophia,

Your affectionate father,

ABRAHAM LEVI.

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LETTER XCIX.

From Mrs. Neville to Mrs. Worthington.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR letter gave us great pleasure.

I was already happy; but the consent of my dear aunt to reside either with us, or near us, is no small addition to my happiness. I pray that the divine blessing may accompany this event, and that many years of health and of increasing felicity may be granted to you by our heavenly Benefactor.

My dear aunt may possibly feel some surprise when I inform her, that next Lord's day Mr. Neville, the two Mr. Cliffords, Signior Albino, Maria and Eusebia, and my dear Mr. Neville and myself, are to be baptized, and added to the church under the care of Mr. Lowe. I am aware that in this particular we must act without your example, and probably without your full approbation. We hope, however, you will give us credit for having carefully examined the New Testament on the subject, and for acting according to our conviction.

Being desirous of walking in communion with a Christian church, it occurred to me I believe, first, as a previous question, *whether I had yet been baptized*; and consequently whether, according to the New Testament, I could be denominated a visible Christian, and entitled to partake of those ordinances which are peculiar to a visible church. For a while I kept my thoughts to myself; but being more and more convinced of the invalidity of infant baptism, I opened my mind to my dear Mr. N. He soon mentioned it to the rest of our friends, and so the subject became a matter of serious consideration and inquiry. Not one among us could bear to reason in the manner of some, that baptism was not essential to salvation, and was therefore of small importance. Neither durst we dismiss the subject, lest it should affect our fellowship with godly

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Pædobaptists. On this point I well remembered many of your conversations, in which you expressed your high esteem for many godly Episcopalians, from whom nevertheless you were obliged to stand aloof in the article of communion, lest you should countenance even a brother in what you considered to be wrong. The result was, that after much prayer, and serious examination, we were all of one mind, that at present we were unbaptized, and that, as no church acting up to the apostolic example could receive us into communion in our present state, it was our duty to be baptized without delay, according to the order which we conceived to be plainly taught in the New Testament.

It is not for me to instruct one so much my superior in age, in wisdom, and in Christian experience: but my dear aunt will permit me to intreat her to reconsider the subject, and to examine whether it be not a necessary consequence arising from the general principle which runs through all her valuable letters, that positive institutions require to be authorized by positive precepts or example.

If we durst flatter ourselves with the hope of seeing her, whom we all so highly esteem, becoming one with us in the most intimate Christian fellowship, great would be the addition to our joy. If, however, my dear aunt cannot come into our views, there are three Pædobaptist churches within less than ten miles of Thornton, and every accommodation will be afforded her.

Mr. Neville's health is fully restored; and he enjoys as much happiness, both in his own breast and in his family, as the present world, of which all the joys are mixed with trouble, will admit.

A union is likely to take place in a month or five weeks between Mr. C. Clifford and our beloved Eusebia. Can you bring your affairs at Islington so nearly to a close before that time as to be present at the wedding? It would very much add to the happiness of the day. If you will let us know a few days beforehand, Mr. Neville and myself will go to Islington to accompany you down.

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Perhaps Miss Levi will accompany us. She is a swee
tempered girl, and fears God. You will be greatly deligh
ed with her manners, and her conversation.

All our friends unite in the kindest respects to you wit

My dear aunt,

Your ever affectionate niece,

MIRANDA NEVILLE.

THE END.

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